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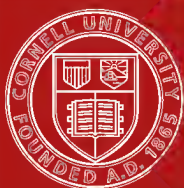
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MUSICAL CRITICISM

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MUSICAL CRITICISM
AND
BIOGRAPHY:

FROM THE PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS DAMANT EATON,

LATE

PRESIDENT OF THE NORWICH CHORAL SOCIETY.

SELECTED and EDITED by HIS SONS.

LONDON:
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P R E F A C E.



THE FOLLOWING SELECTION has been made with the view of preserving in a convenient and durable form the more generally interesting of the Author's writings on music. Critical notices of *Performances* have, therefore, for the most part been omitted, though in some cases extracts from them have been inserted in order to illustrate a principle or to continue an analysis of the music performed. A few short extracts have also been added for the sake of giving a more complete picture of the Author's opinions, and of enriching the book with his descriptions of the style and peculiarities of some of the great musicians of his time. It is hoped that this Memorial Volume will be a welcome addition to musical literature, and the means of carrying on the Author's work ; thus enabling him ' still to serve that good cause to which his life was so much devoted.'

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PART I.
CRITICAL.

Musical Criticism and Biography.

ENGLISH MUSIC.

CONVIVIVM MUSICUM: A COLLOQUY OF THE DEAD.

BY AN ANGLO-SAXON AMATEUR.

(*From the 'Anglo-Saxon' of 1850.*)

SCENE: THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

Colloquy I.—DR. ARNE, JACKSON, SHIELD.

Fack. Welcome, dear Shield, to the felicity of these Elysian shades. Let us repose, with Arne, upon yon flowery bank. There will we converse together upon the art we still love; *accompanied* the while by the murmur of a *streamlet*, as melodious and soothing as your own.

Shield. Alas! the spirit of Shield is unworthy to mix with such associates as Jackson and Arne.

Fack. Pray lay aside that affectation of modesty. You displayed too much of it, even for the other world, in your celebrated 'Essay on Harmony.'

Arne. Modesty, either real or affected, will never be imputed to Jackson of Exeter! But tell me,

Shield, (not that I care,) does my music yet retain a degree of public favour ?

Shield. Your 'Rule, Britannia,' is 'familiar as household words,' wherever the British flag floats upon the breeze. Yet few, I suspect, could name you the composer. Some say you stole it from the Italian ; be that as it may, it still divides the national heart with 'God save the King.'

Jack. Is 'God save the King' still popular in England ? Why, I published my reasons for despising that trash, and hoped to have seen it shelved before I died.

Shield. It is not the only point on which you and the public could not quite agree. 'Non nobis Domine' is more sung than ever, whilst the canon you wrote with a view to supplant it has long been consigned to 'the tomb of all the Capulets.'

Jack. I wish, Shield, you could break yourself of constantly *quoting*. It renders your 'Essay on Harmony' ridiculous. What business, for instance, had the 'judicious Hooker' in an 'Essay on Harmony' ?—to say nothing of the clumsy way in which you have introduced him.

Shield. I confess I wanted your facility of style. But I wrote that 'Essay' for the sake of the examples. You must allow that these are not without merit.

Arne. I am glad that 'Rule, Britannia,' maintains my reputation. Ah ! I always liked an air that

would grind about the streets.' But what do people say of my operas now ?

Shield. 'Comus,' 'Artaxerxes,' and one or two others are occasionally revived. But perhaps it would give you little pleasure to hear them.

Arne. How so ?

Shield. The managers have a trick of substituting some trashy ballad of the day, which has nothing to do with the story, in place of the most important song in the opera.

Arne. I'm glad I am dead !

Shield. If they did not do this, the best lady singer would have no opportunity of showing off her grand *cadenza*.

Arne. Oh that I had burnt all my scores before I died !

Shield. Singers, you know, must be nursed and indulged ; besides, you are little aware of the trouble of getting up a modern *cadenza*. In the first place, care must be taken that it have no individual *character*. I mean, that it have no relation to any *particular song*.

Arne. Sir, your singers would have driven me mad. If *I* know anything of music, a *cadenza* should be founded upon the melody that it is expressly intended to grace. It should seem to grow, as it were, out of the subject—to be suggested by the immediate air—to derive its meaning——

Shield. My dear Doctor, a modern *cadenza* ought

to have *no* meaning ; otherwise how could it be made to form a part of fifty or a hundred different songs ? Give me leave to enlighten your darkness a little. Before a lady ventures to ' make her first appearance,' she studies the '*Grace-book*,' or goes perhaps to some hackney composer for half a score *cadenzas*, which (like a young curate's paternal sermons) are to carry her safely through her professional life. Now, these *cadenzas* must embrace every difficulty which the zealous aspirant is capable of executing ; they must abound with chromatic runs and divisions ; they must include the utmost compass of the voice ; they must have holding notes that will admit of swells, and pauses at the proper points for shakes ; they must have both *staccato* and *legato* passages ; because the former will exhibit neatness of articulation, and the latter will develop purity of tone. They must also——

Arne. If I were alive, I should die of laughter.

Jack. Can the tasteful aristocracy of England relish this sort of display ?

Shield. By no means. They are, however, compelled to endure it, and that by their own fault. It is now reckoned extremely vulgar to betray any outward symptom of pleasure or disgust. Only the gods in the gallery are guilty of this rudeness ; hence *their* noisy approbation, in the absence of all other evidence, must be taken for the sense of the audience. Now, what is so likely to enrapture the gods as a run, a swell, and a shake ?

Jack. This is a melancholy picture indeed.

Shield. I own it is. Since it would be obviously impossible to perform these tricks with such airs as 'Gentle youth, ah! tell me why,' 'Blow, blow, thou winter's wind,' 'Where the bee sucks,' or, indeed, with any rational melody, we have been driven into a showy, rambling, unmeaning style of writing, with scarcely any character whatever.

Jack. A melody, in order to be good, must form a connected whole; it must be a true chain of dependencies, whereof you cannot break a single link without injuring the general effect. This is the principle I always kept in view when composing my duets and canzonettes.

Shield. Your duets perhaps have scarcely been excelled by any succeeding writer, at least in your own country. Your canzonettes are of little use in private life, on account of the figured basses.

Jack. Why, you would not have had me leave the voice entirely without accompaniment?

Shield. Certainly not. But the modern practice is, to write a melodious accompaniment for the right hand, the chords being elegantly filled up, so that nothing, save expression, is left to the choice of the performer.

Jack. That strikes me as being an excellent improvement.

Shield. It is only one out of many. Handel and his contemporaries clipped their songs, like their trees,

into a stiff and formal pattern ; the moderns allow their melodies to grow as nature and good taste dictate.

Jack. You forget what you have just been telling us about *cadenzas*.

Shield. No ; I then merely censured an abuse, to which our music may be more liable than yours, but which is nevertheless separable from it.

Arne. And pray what is your objection to the form of Handel's songs ?

Shield. They consist of a long and masterly movement, complete in itself, and satisfactory to the ear : so far all is well. But the tyrant Custom whispered to Handel that it would be necessary to append some ten or twenty bars of minor modulation ; and, as he could not end here, he was obliged to send us back, by a *da capo*, to the beginning of the first strain ; thus jading his singer, and cheating himself of an *encore*.

Arne. I think this construction of a song may be rendered very effective.

Jack. Nothing can justify it as an imperative rule, and such it seems to have been practically. Let me quote an example from your own works, Doctor. I have always thought your 'Vengeance, O come inspire me,' in the 'Masque of Alfred,' a very spirited composition in E \flat . The little imitation between the treble and bass in the symphony is really delicious. After the song is, to all intents and purposes, ended, and the audience are beginning to applaud, you chill

them with fifteen bars of modulation through the keys of C minor, F minor, and G minor; for no better reason, you must be aware, than that this would be expected by the critics. Then comes the *da capo*. But how tame is your second invocation of 'Vengeance' when compared with the first! Your fruitless attempt to rekindle the fire only shows how completely you had quenched it.

Arne. There is a good deal of truth in that, but you must not be too hard upon me. Consider what I had to go through! Handel had his troubles, and I am sure I had mine. I was abused by rascally foreigners, and, what was worse, by my own fellow-countrymen. Sir, they tried to crush me with the overwhelming weight of Handel. They accused me of ignorance and barbarism. They drove me to Vauxhall for bread, and then affected to despise me for writing in the style of Vauxhall. Where would have been the use of my departing from the model of Handel? An omission of that minor modulation would have been imputed, not to the independence of genius, or to the discrimination of a refined taste, but to an abject poverty of resources. By Jove, Sir, they would have told me that I didn't know how to modulate.

Shield. A very good personal defence, Doctor; but since you are at the bar, I shall prefer another charge against you. Pardon my freedom; I never could reconcile myself to the final close of your songs. It has neither the dignity of Handel's cadence, nor the

expression of that of Mozart, but is a commonplace piddling run, that carries its date upon the face of it.

Arne. He who writes for the vulgar must write what will please the vulgar. You know I was condemned to Vauxhall.

Shield. Cadences, graces, and divisions stamp the date of a composition, whereas a simple unadorned melody is for all ages and nations: such are many of yours.

Jack. Few composers have prudence enough to be satisfied with doing a good thing *once*; if they had, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to steal it from them. I am told that Mozart has carried the chromatic appoggiatura into almost everything he wrote. A host of servile imitators, who could not catch a sparkle of his genius, were glad to seize upon this peculiarity; so that what was characteristic of the *man* has at length become the mannerism of his *day*. Now had Mozart (or whoever first invented this appoggiatura) restricted it to the piece in which it first appeared, it would have been recognised ever after as part of an individual melody, and could not have become antiquated.

Shield. Mozart had a creative genius if ever man had, though he was not quite free from singularity.

Arne. Sir, the supposition of an original writer, devoid of singularity, seems to me to be self-contradictory. What is originality but a certain style, or

character, or *something* (whatever you choose to call it) in a composition, whereby it differs essentially from every other? This distinguishing feature is a salient point for the imitator. There is no security therefore for the composer; his best ideas will be appropriated and debased, till the public appetite, satiated with repetition, reject both the copies and their type.

Shield. I am not sure of that. An imitator must be careful to borrow, not that which is peculiar to *one* air, but that which is common to *many*, otherwise the plagiarism would be immediately detected.

Jack. There are different degrees, nay, different *kinds* of originality. Where this quality consists of petty strokes, such as the turning of a cadence, the introduction of a grace-note, or the connection of independent, though perhaps expressive phrases, each of these may be pilfered separately, and so be made to embroider a thousand different airs. This sort of originality I should have envied no man; but when the entire flow of the melody is original—when a grand subject is made to unfold itself gradually, till we behold it as it existed in the conception of the composer, a perfect, undivided whole—it may safely bid defiance to the powers of imitation. For what, in such a case, is there to lay hold of? Mere parts, taken by themselves, are worth nothing. It is not the brick, but the design, that constitutes the beauty of the building.

Arne. By Jove, Jackson, I like that remark.

Jack. Who would ever think of stealing from the 'Hallelujah Chorus'?

Arne. True; very true.

Jack. Sometimes two different degrees of originality meet in the same composition; the one liable to be imitated, the other not. Take, for instance, the 'Dead March' in 'Saul.' A sublime effect is produced by the peculiar accompaniment with the drum. Whether the subject is taken up by the whole orchestra, or left to the bewailing flutes, still the melancholy, sullen beat of the drum goes on—on—on, till the very life-blood begins to curdle at your heart.

Shield. It does, Jackson, it does; that is, it *did* when we were alive.

Jack. Now here you have originality of *effect* produced by originality of *treatment*. But as the drum is common property, and, moreover, only capable of measure—in short, as anybody may write a drum part to a march—later composers have constructed dead marches, into which they have infused this sort of effect without having been considered plagiarists; but then they respected Handel's melody. The originality of effect in the 'Dead March' in 'Saul' is partly due to originality of *subject*; and this it is which distinguishes that famous march from all the other dead marches that have been, or ever will be written.

Shield. Even a short and simple air may be original and inimitable. Some of Dibdin's songs are of this character. He who hears them once would know them

again anywhere. The same may be said of 'Cease your funning.' Who could borrow from this little tune with a chance of escaping detection? Melodies of this sort may be sung till people get tired of them, and then they will be consigned to temporary oblivion. Another generation accidentally revives them, and they spring up as fresh and beautiful as ever. They may long lie dormant, but they never die.

Jack. Your minute critic seldom hears A, B, C, in succession in a piece of music, without calling your attention to some *other* piece, wherein the same progression of melody occurs. Then he shakes his head, looks wondrous wise, and convicts the unlucky composer of plagiarism. Now, a man cannot be fairly accused of plagiarism, unless he steals somewhat of the *character* of a melody, and to do this he must generally purloin a whole period.

Shield. Mozart begins an 'Et incarnatus est' with the first period of the second strain of 'God save the King;' and yet the effect is so totally different, that the identity of the notes does not make it a plagiarism.

Jack. He who really understands the art, knows that casual coincidences are inevitable in music. Consider how large a portion of every composition consists of fragments of the scale, and of the tonic and dominant harmonies drawn out into *arpeggio*.

Shield. The cry now is, that melody is exhausted.

Arne. Bah! Sir. The same twaddle was talked in

my day ; but the poverty was in the artists, not in the art. *I* never found myself at a loss for ideas, or for notes to express them.

Shield. Nor I. Indeed I used to say, ' Practise the scale, and ideas will crowd upon you even to your own astonishment.' Yet some modern composers are ever ransacking the heights and depths of the scale in search of originality. No compass of voice, or even instrument, will satisfy them. One thing only they forget to obtain, which is, a natural *simplicity*.

Arne. That is quite enough to account for their failure.

Fack. Music is at once both poor in resources and rich in variety ; but a remarkable peculiarity is, that she is indebted to this very poverty for her riches.

Arne. Sir, you remind me of that quaint line in the play :

My wound is *great* because it is so *small* ;

and of the rejoinder of the witty Duke of Buckingham :

Then 'twould be greater were it none at all.

Fack. Seven notes—only seven notes out of the great system of sounds—form our musical scale.

Shield. You may enlarge as much as you please by repeating these notes in their octaves.

Fack. Yes ; but repetition is not novelty.

Shield. Then you have the semitones at your disposal. By the help of flats and sharps you may take

any note included in the diatonic scale as a new key-note.

Jack. Say rather you may begin your scale where you please, provided you construct it upon the diatonic model ; however, mere transposition does not alter a melody. Sing ' Cease your funning ' in whatever key you may, it will be ' Cease your funning ' still.

Shield. But modulation enables you to take new notes.

Jack. Not many. In going from C to G you get only F \sharp , and in going from C to F you only get B \flat . You also get only G \sharp , and occasionally F \sharp by passing from C to A minor. Abrupt modulations do more for you in this respect, but these are generally reckoned bad, except in recitative ; at least they were so in my day. Now consider for a moment the advantages we derive from this state of things. If the scale be restricted to narrow limits, so also is the ordinary compass of the voice ; the one, therefore, is admirably adapted to the other. The circumstance of the same notes forming a large part of several scales enables us to exhibit great freedom of modulation within the range of the octave ; and the liberty we have of repeating our scale, either above or below, gives scope for the employment of all kinds of voices in harmonical combinations. Had the scale been more contracted, it might have equally answered the purposes of colloquial intercourse. I am therefore of opinion——

Shield. Pardon me for interrupting you, but this

reminds me of a curious passage in Dr. Beattie's 'Dissertation on the Theory of Language.' He there mentions it as being 'somewhat remarkable, that of those voices which are most necessary in harmony, as trebles and basses, there is great abundance, while counter-tenor voices, whereof one is sufficient in a numerous chorus, are not often met with.'

Jack. I was about to observe, that the elements of music are given by nature, or rather by the beneficent Author of nature, as a soil which cultivation is to render fruitful. Light is not more curiously adapted to the eye, nor sound to the ear, than is the scale to man's musical organisation.

Arne. Sir, you seem to take it for granted that our diatonic scale is as natural a thing as a self-sown tree. But you should remember that man, in the savage state, is content with a less perfect series of sounds. I believe the Chinese scale, even to this day, wants the 4th and the 7th. The same deficiency is observable in ancient Scotch and Irish melodies.

Jack. That strengthens my case.

Arne. Be consistent ; either adhere to the primitive simplicity of nature, or take in all the resources of art. You know the scale may be minor as well as major, chromatic as well as diatonic.

Jack. I might safely deny the existence of a chromatic scale ; but all I contend for is this—that you cannot exceed a major 7th without repeating some note contained within that interval. This argues

poverty. Consider the scale as a system of tetra-chords, and this poverty becomes greater still. Let the scale be

C D E F—G A B C.

The latter half of it is the same melody in the key of G that the first half is in that of C ; and the first half is the same melody in the key of F that the latter half is in that of C. But if the scale be thus meagre, is harmony less so ? Let me consider this matter a little. In the first place we have only two chords ; the common chord, and the discord of the 7th.

Shield. Nay, but out of the common chord you get the chords of the 6 and $\frac{6}{4}$; and out of the discord of the 7th you get——

Jack. Can you call a mere difference of arrangement a new chord ? That you get variety by it I do not mean to dispute. But the very fact of your being driven to this shift is evidence of the poverty I speak of. Really, Shield, you remind one of the poor fellow who lined his blue cloak with red cloth, and wore it inside out on Sundays, to make people believe he had *two* !

Shield. We have major, minor, and imperfect chords.

Jack. Of course you may take your chord, or your discord, on any note of the scale, and this gives rise to specific differences. It is another proof of your poverty, another shift to which you are driven. The common chord on the lowest note of the scale, preceded by the

discord of the 7th upon the fifth note of the same scale, constitutes the *perfect cadence*, or *key*. Now I will tell you a secret. You play the perfect cadence and are charmed with it ; you then have recourse to the shifts I have mentioned. You try the different species of these chords and their inversions ; but, finding them all more or less unsatisfactory, you return to the common chord with which you started, and there is an end of your music !

Arne. By Jove, Sir, you make the art cut a pretty figure.

Fack. And yet, Doctor, the murder is not quite out. You are restricted in the use of even these slender means. You cannot pass from scale to scale, from chord to chord, *ad libitum*. You must make every chord a kind of servant of all work ; at least you must employ it in more than one capacity. Thus in the key of C you must use the chord of C again and again, because it is part of the perfect cadence. If you take refuge in the key of G, you do not get rid of it, because here it has a part to play as 4th of the new scale. If you modulate into F, this chord of C will be still more important, since, with the addition of B♭, it becomes the dominant or governing harmony. Nay, even in E minor you will find it of use for the purpose of interrupting the close. Now the unavoidable repetition which this state of things engenders would seem, *a priori*, fatal to all originality ; whereas it is, in point of fact, a mine of inexhaustible riches.

That the common chord may be used in various capacities depends entirely upon the influence of a key. The key is omnipotent in music. Suppose yourselves in C major, and every chord you play will have relation to that key, till the introduction of some new dominant prepares the ear for modulation. The chord of D minor, for instance, will raise an expectation of the perfect cadence. Disappoint that expectation by taking B \flat with your chord of C. Let the chord of D minor immediately follow. Mark now the difference. D minor no longer invites the perfect cadence in C, but leads through the chord of G *minor* to the dominant of F. The key is no sooner changed than, as if by magic, every chord of the former scale assumes a totally new character, with new duties and new affinities. Here, then, we have a clue to the true source of originality, of sublimity, of beauty.

The paramount importance of a key has been too little insisted upon by theoretical writers, if we except, perhaps, Bemetzrieder. His doctrine of the *calls* strikes me as being singularly original and elegant. He considers B, D, F, A, as so many *calls*, and C, E, G, the sounds *called*. 'The natural sounds, C, E, G,' says he, 'are always the notes of the cadence. When the sonorous body has possessed itself of our ears, the other sounds, B, D, F, A, only serve to make us wish for the return of nature. Melody and harmony offer us, without cease, but a chain of wanderings, more or less distant; but a series of little collisions, more or

less violent ; but a repetition of the *calls*, more or less energetic, from, with, and after nature, which we all regret in quitting, and which we only quit in order that we may return to her with greater pleasure. What then,' he adds, 'is music? My opinion may be controverted, but experience unites with me to define it. The art of music is no other than the art of pushing at a distance the natural sounds to make them come back upon us more agreeably. Let us depart from this rule in practice—no more melody; no more harmony.'

The root and the third are allowed to be the most important notes of the tonic chord. The former, because it is the key-note; the latter because it determines whether that key be major or minor.

Bemetzrieder's theory will furnish us with an additional reason. The key-note and its third are each placed between two *calls*, and are each, moreover, called *chromatically*; whereas the calls of the fifth are both extremely feeble.

The same doctrine admirably accounts for the new affinities produced by modulation. To give you an example: by adding B \flat to the chord of C, the note E, which was one of the notes *called*, immediately becomes a most powerful *call*; whilst F, which was an energetic *call*, is now the most important of the *called* notes.

This delicate theory might have been better received by musicians, had it not been for the extreme

vigour with which its practical observance must have fettered them in composition.

Shield. Then I am sure it would never go down with the writers of the present day. Look at our '*fashionable chords*;' our German, French, Italian, and Neapolitan sixes; our diminished 7ths; our double enharmonic changes; our——

Arne. What, what, what, Sir? What jargon is this? I know nothing of the chords you talk of—at least by those names—except the diminished 7th, which I used myself upon proper occasions; but really——

Fack. I foresaw what we should come to. These chords, my dear Doctor, are nothing more than extravagant *calls*, which composers now-a-days insert before the concord, in order that they may taste it with keener relish. They are to the ear what a devilled chicken is to the palate, a mere artificial provocation of thirst. Once in a while a temperate man may indulge without offence in this sort of pleasure; but nothing can excuse it as a habit.

Shield. Jackson is right. You might as well expect a confirmed brandy-drinker to enjoy a draught of water, as that ears long accustomed to these powerful stimulants should be charmed with the pure simplicity of nature.

Fack. Nevertheless as music, like all other arts, is progressive, I am satisfied that much improvement must have been made in it.

Arne. Sir, I don't know. The million want taste. How else can you account for their neglect of *my* music?

Jack. Much of it was hissed as soon as it came out, for the sake of the doggerel to which you *would* set it.

Arne. Doggerel, Sir? doggerel? Why, I was often *my own* poet.

Jack. More fool you. Why not be content with setting other people's sense, instead of obtruding nonsense of your own? The cobbler ought to have stuck to his last.

Arne. Come, I like that from Exeter Jackson. *You* stuck to *nothing*, Sir. *You* must be painter, philosopher, critic, the devil knows what. You were Jack of all trades. You were——

Jack. What I attempted I at least did well.

Arne. You say it yourself——

Mercury. Silence, there, you rascally fiddlers! Pray keep the peace, or I'll strike you all dumb. Methinks you had quarrelling enough in your lives, for you did little else.

Shield. Nay, we only——

Mercury. Silence, I say, or I'll do it, by Styx!

ENGLISH MUSIC.

CONVIVIUM RELIGIOSUM: A COLLOQUY OF THE DEAD.

BY AN ANGLQ-SAXON AMATEUR.

(*From the 'Anglo-Saxon' of 1830.*)

SCENE: THE ELYSIAN FIELDS.

Colloquy II.—DR. BECKWITH, THE REV. W. JONES,
DR. CHARD.

THE following account of Dr. Beckwith's last illness was written by Mr. John Beckwith, shortly after his father's decease, at the request of the late James Bennett, Esq., of Norwich, by whom it was communicated to the author of the following Colloquy, about nine years ago. Whatever may be thought of the *play*, it is expected that the *prologue* will be read with interest, since it gives an authentic account of the last moments of one of the best and most learned of our modern Anglo-Saxon composers for the Church.

'Dear Sir,—Since I parted with you, several circumstances have occurred to me respecting my revered

father, which will serve to show how little to be expected was the dreadful stroke which deprived his family and friends of his valuable life.

‘For many days previous to the attack, he appeared as well in health, and as collected in mind, as he ever was; no drowsiness or stupor, no want of memory was observable in his business or conversation.

‘On Sunday morning he played as usual at St. Peter’s [Church], and in the afternoon, after St. Peter’s service, at the Cathedral, in his own peculiar style of excellence.

‘After tea in the evening he took a long walk on the Ipswich road, and came home by Lakenham; his conversation during the walk was remarkably pleasing, and often recurs to my mind with increasing pleasure. At our return home we found Mr. Cocks [Cox] waiting for my father, who had appointed him for the purpose of trying an anthem compiled by my father from the works of Handel, with considerable additions of his own composition. It happened that ‘Lord, remember David,’ which is introduced in the anthem, was mislaid, and could not be found; it was the song that Cocks [Cox] more particularly wanted to rehearse. My father, without hesitation, sat down and wrote the song out from memory, with a trifling variation from the original, for I have since looked it over. Cocks [Cox] sang it, and my father accompanied him. He played a part also of Handel’s ‘Coronation Anthem,’ as it was his intention that it

should be performed on the following Sunday, being the King's birthday.

‘He ate sparingly at supper, which was his habit, but his conversation, as usual, was cheerful and instructive. He conversed much on religious subjects. He went to bed rather early.

‘On the Monday morning he rose, I believe, about eight (I was out at an earlier hour, and did not see my father till dinner-time). He was rather late with the Miss Bosanquets, the last scholars he taught, and did not get home to dinner till half after two. I thought his manner hurried, but not more so than I had frequently seen him when late home. He ate a hearty dinner off a shoulder of veal, and was perfectly cheerful, as we all were, little imagining what a shocking circumstance was about to take place. My father rose from table before the cloth was removed, and took the wine from the cupboard. He went to the door. My father was always remarkably kind and attentive to dumb animals. A cat was sitting near the door ; he spoke to it in a tone of peculiar sweetness—“Pussy, pussy, shall I let you out?” We observed his face to be much flushed. After he had left the room we mentioned [this] to my mother, who did not remark it, adding, that the dinner had disagreed with my father. My mother went in search of him, and found him, rubbing his right hand and arm at the kitchen fire. On my mother asking his reason for doing so, he replied, “Mary, this is a paralytic stroke.” He rubbed his face and was much agitated.

He said, "I will endeavour to shake it off though." He hasted with irregular steps to the garden. He did not proceed far. He became more affected, and was just saved by my mother from falling. The fatal stupor followed immediately, and never left him entirely. Now and then a dawn of reason appeared, but it was of short duration.' . . .

It may be worth while to add, that Dr. John Beckwith died June 3, 1809, aged 58; and that his son, Mr. John Beckwith, died October 19, 1819, at the age of 31. They are both buried under the organ-gallery of St. Peter Mancroft Church, Norwich.*

Jones. I am rather pleased than surprised, my dear Doctor, at seeing you here. You had a temper framed
for Elysium.

Beckwith. I was naturally irritable; but knowing patience to be one of the cardinal virtues in a teacher, I laboured successfully to conquer that failing. You will please to recollect that I devoted twelve, and often thirteen hours a day, to the most slavish part of my profession.

Jones. The Church, Doctor, did not know your value, though my friend Bishop Horne did. You had a vigorous fancy, enriched with learning and refined by taste. I trust posterity will do you justice.

Beck. If hats were worn here I would take mine off.

* When this was written the organ stood at the west end of the church; it has since been moved to the north-east corner.

Not that I think you merely mean to compliment. Flattery was not one of your faults.

Jones. No ; I always spoke my mind pretty freely. I did not mince the matter in my 'Treatise of the Art of Music.'

Beck. You know how much I admired your compositions.

Jones. Perhaps I ought to have been ashamed of composing *so well* ; but so long as music shall be part of devotion she will have strong claims upon the clergy.

Beck. Man may be defined, *par excellence*, a musical animal ; for though we have singing birds whose notes are not disagreeable, they are yet very different from what we understand by music.

Jones. The canary-bird is said to have a larger brain than perhaps any other animal of the same size and weight. Your phrenologists tell us (as I am informed—they are since my time) that the organ of tune is planed off in the cuckoo. What do they mean by their 'organ of tune' ? It takes a whole brain, and a good one too, to make a musician.

Beck. Music, like religion, whose handmaid she is,—music, my dear Sir, is a *transcendental* that runs through all the business of life. Whether men weep or rejoice, marry or bury, pray or fight, they are equally indebted to her aid.

Jones. Music sways the Indian savage at the present moment, I venture to say, as much as she once did

the sages of Greece and Rome; and when those countries sank into effeminacy, the corruption was first discoverable in their music.

Beck. } Music——
Jones. }

Mercury. One at a time, gentlemen, or I shall be obliged to use my wand. Here is your friend Dr. Chard just landed; pray try to console him. He threatened to pitch Charon into the Styx, for refusing to load the boat with manuscript music!

Beck. My brother of Winchester? Welcome, dear Chard. But how you are *aged*! By the bye, you used to be a peaceable fellow; you must mind your hits if you quarrel with Charon.

Chard. Curse the fellow!—he *would* bring me over without my luggage. I only asked a passage for my own compositions. The rail would have carried them free, if one travelled first class. Let me see;—about seventy anthems, twelve services, with chants, and minor pieces in proportion.

Jones. I am glad you were not permitted to bring them. They now belong to your Church and country.

Beck. As to that, of course they have all been published?

Chard. *Published!* Beckwith, how green you are! But I forget how long you've been dead. And yet you might remember that, in better times, you durst not risk a thin volume of chants without a subscription. Jones, too, grudged the cost of the plates for his

'Treatise on Music,' well knowing he had small chance of seeing his money again,' notwithstanding his position in the Church, his interest with the great, his dedication to the directors of the concerts of ancient music, and his long list of subscribers. As for my works, if the world cared to have them, I should gladly have left them behind me.

Jones. So music does not sell?

Chard. I did not say *that*. Some music sells at a very good price; take quadrilles and polkas. Songs of a certain class are also popular. For instance, there is one called 'Jump, Jim Crowe,' that must have paid the author well. Just hear a few bars. . . .

Jones. Hold, Sir! unless you mean to drive me mad.

Beck. Such songs have their own times and places; but how does sacred music get on?

Chard. Grand triennial festivals have been established in the provinces, and in London there are performances in Exeter Hall which you would be delighted to hear. The oratorios of Handel and other great composers are *mounted*, as they now say, in a style of which you can form no idea. Five or six hundred performers, vocal and instrumental, are employed in the orchestra, and the improvements in wind instruments have been so important, that our bands are now nearly perfect. Some of the choral effects that I have heard upon these high occasions have been awfully sublime.

Jones. Chard, you delight me. But now, tell me candidly, do you think *my Treatise* has in anywise contributed to this state of things?

[*Chard.* Your Treatise! How should it? It never was read. Musicians could not relish your beautiful language; scholars could not understand your musical examples; your philosophy, too, has had its day. But your name stands high, with good men and true, throughout the length and breadth of Old England.

Beck. Tell me, Chard—you see I can bear it—that my compositions, like my body, are buried.

Chard. No, my old friend; you wrong the world there. Your works continue in high repute amongst candid and competent judges of the art. Your noble chants are still often heard, and never without exciting devotion.

Jones. Church music flourishes, and I am content.

Chard. Why—a—hem! Abuses have crept in; chanting has found its way into parochial services, but how is it performed? When you come to the *Amen* in the *Gloria Patri*, an *adagio* is commenced upon the last half of the penultimate bar. You will scarcely believe me, but, upon my honour, I have heard this done even in a cathedral.

Beck. Your organists are without excuse. I left them my rules for the performance of the chant. I said, 'This should be very decent, grave, and uniform; the choir attentive to their several parts; the organ

not too loud ; the length of the concluding semibreve never exceeded, a pause being disagreeable, unnecessary, and distracting ; the organ should not clog the voices by hanging on the note of recital a moment after the words are finished.' It is true I did not tell them not to violate the time of the penultimate bar, because the possibility of their so doing never entered my head. Now, what defence could they make for their practice ?

Chard. They would probably say that your style of chanting had passed away, like any other fashion, and music was the better for it.

Jones. Which would be tantamount to saying that the sense of man, as it was in Dr. Beckwith's time, had turned to nonsense, and was the better for it.

Chard. To return to the parochial service. I think it is to be regretted that some organists and choirs are ambitious of concluding with an anthem. They disdain the psalm-tune as being beneath their powers, little dreaming how incompetent they often are to do it justice.

Jones. In this they resemble those young artists who rush to colour before they are masters of form and the effects of light and shade. But men should weigh well the reason of what they do. Now the object of church music is to excite devotion : if it effect this, it answers its proper end ; if not, it does more harm than good.

Beck. I was always an advocate for congregational singing, and for this the psalm tune is better adapted than any other form of composition. However, I tried, in spite of the authority of Dr. Burney, to make the people join even in the cathedral chant. We ought to recollect that we are all capable of varying the tones of our voice, that we often find a peculiar pleasure in sounds, and that most of us possess an imitative power of expressing sounds similar to those we hear. If with these be combined a just conception of mensuration, we have the grand requisites of singing. It is presumed that no one would venture to join in a chant, if conscious that he is not able to express himself in either tone or time. A congregation of Christians, who assemble to adore their Creator, *will* and *should*, in the best manner they can, follow the invitation, 'O come, let us sing unto the Lord!' There is somewhat in singing, though ever so soft, far more elevating to the mind than reading over the verses with the choir in a dull indifferent manner. In this part of the service fine singing is no particular object, and in the hymns and anthems all people would be profoundly silent.

Chard. Though psalm tunes are easily executed, they require to be played with judgment.

Beck. They should be performed with the utmost solemnity, and with the strictest regard to *time*. The notes should never be drawled, and the start-note, if there be one, should always be felt as unaccented,

otherwise the rhythm would be violated. The only ornaments I allowed to the psalm tune were the shake and the appoggiatura.

Chard. To which I would add, perhaps, the passing note; but adjunct notes and turns are abominable.

Jones. How often has my patience been tried, and my nerves put upon the rack, by the impertinent quaverings in some country choirs, while at the same time I have observed the congregation either laughing or frowning, and all serious people uneasy at seeing every good end defeated for which music is brought into the church. However, I have no objection to appoggiaturas and passing notes, sparingly employed, if the tune be written in plain counterpoint; but composers generally weave these into the texture of their melodies.

Beck. Florid psalm tunes are execrable. Without simplicity there can be no dignity. What can be more simple or more elevating, for instance, than the Old Hundredth?

Chard. Great care is required in the selection of proper tunes for public worship. Of the old ones that have come down to us, all are not good; neither is a tune necessarily the worse for being modern. Nay, some of the finest of the old tunes have been so disfigured by *graces* in many of the late editions, that the composers would scarcely recognise them.

Jones. It is a safe way to consider old psalm tunes as consisting either of minims or crotchets, and then

to proceed as follows. If the tune be written in minims, strike out all the crotchets; if in crotchets, expunge the quavers. Play it over; and if you find a short note anywhere necessary to complete the air, insert one that belongs to the harmony. If the effect be improved, you will know that you have only removed a modern varnish of graces; but if not, depend upon it the tune was good for nothing.

Chard. In the first part of the 'People's Music Book,' published by the organist of Westminster Abbey and the Gresham Professor of Music, there is a tune by Dr. Croft, set in E minor to the words, 'Lord, in thy wrath, reprove me not,' which is deservedly a favourite in our churches. Mr. Turle has added a fourth part to it. If you strike out the first crotchet in the penultimate bar of the second strain and make the next note a minim, the melody will be sufficiently pure; but the crotchets in the minor parts injure the majesty of the subject. Neither should the word 'Lord' have been put to a start-note. The line might be advantageously transposed and altered thus: 'In anger, Lord, reprove me not.' The interrupted cadence upon the word 'Lord' would be sublime; the transition to the relative major at the commencement of the second strain is the acme of pathos.

Jones. Major chords are supposed to be cheerful, and minor ones the reverse. This, however, depends entirely upon the key. The major chord that interrupts the cadence in the minor mode is solemn, not

cheerful. In major keys, minor chords lose their mournful character.

Beck. The case of semitones is analogous. You must have a succession of them if you would hear them wail. Take, for example, the passage to the words, 'hear my suit, or else I die,' in the duet, 'Who calls my parting soul from rest?' in Handel's 'Esther;' and the '*Juxta crucem lachrymosa*,' in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*; whereas in the melody of the diatonic scale the ear does not recognise the semitones.

Jones. Single intervals must be unexpected to raise peculiar emotions, but their power is great when they come upon you suddenly. The mind is remarkably softened and depressed by hearing a minor interval where a major, as belonging to the scale of the key, was expected. How sweetly pathetic is the new flat seventh in that simple air of Handel, 'Sin not, O King, against the youth.' But it is only in slow music that effects can arise from single intervals: the impression is otherwise too transient; it must be like the gentle rain that has time to sink into the ground.

Chard. To return to church music; I was about to observe, that there is some excellent matter for psalm tunes at the end of Kollman's 'New Theory,' in the shape of hymns. One begins, 'Eternity, tremendous word;' another is headed, 'Gastorius at Jena, 1675.' But the best is a piece in the Phrygian mode ('Com-

mit thy ways and goings '*) , from the 'Grosse Passionsmusik' of J. S. Bach. Kollman himself says, 'This is to my feelings the finest hymn possible.' Weber has inserted it in a long sacred composition of his own. Such, however, is the difference in the styles, that it was something like patching a scarlet pair of breeches with a bit of blue cloth.

Beck. I somewhat regret that I did not introduce that noble hymn, as well as some of Bach's famous *Corales*, into the church I served. But you know how slavishly my time was consumed. I used to do an air from 'Der Tod Jesu,' by Graun ; we called it 'Martin Luther's Hymn ;' is that still in use ?

Chard. Oh yes ; it was one of your best. There is another which you also did, (called 'Oxford, or Coombs,' in the 'People's Music Book,') which has had the run of our churches from time immemorial. Yet few of the old airs are so contemptible. The commonplace triplets, the unmeaning suspensions at the beginning of the last strain, and the old-fashioned jump that the melody makes before the cadence, are in the very worst taste. However, our tunes, upon the whole, are as good as the version to which they belong.

Jones. Whose version is now employed ?

Chard. That of Brady and Tate.

Jones. My friend Bishop Horne praises Merrick's in his 'Commentary on the Psalms.'

* This hymn is not in the 'New Theory,' but in the 'Essay on Harmony.'

Beck. Merrick's is far superior. Nay, I even prefer the despised rhymes of Sternold and Hopkins. I would have 'All people that on earth do dwell' to the 'Old Hundredth.' The plain simplicity of the words accords well with the stately march of the melody.

Jones. The version of Brady and Tate is bad, but not equally bad throughout.

Beck. Unfortunately, we get the worst of it. One line I never hear without being tempted to make a profane alteration, 'Let the cheerful song go round.' For *song* substitute *glass*; that is what the *poets* must have been dreaming of. Then in another place we have 'lead the van' and 'bring up the rear.' Pray, were Brady and Tate privates in some marching regiment?

Chard. Would to Heaven they had been! In that capacity they might have done their country some service.

Jones. Brady and Tate were at least unexceptionable in their metre, which is no small praise. Whoever undertakes to improve upon them, must, like them, shun the anapestic measure—dactyls with trochaic endings to the lines must be carefully excluded from the church.

Chard. After all, it must be admitted that the loftiest poetry, wedded to the finest music, is liable to be marred in its effect by some blundering organist. 'Hawks should not pick out hawks' een;' but I must confess this, it is too much the fashion to introduce piddling interludes between the verses of the psalm;

these are supposed to be extemporaneous effusions, and I hope really are so, for pity it were such stuff should be written.

Jones. How, if the sense be *suspended* at the end of the verse? This occasionally happens.

Chard. *Sense*, my dear Sir, has nothing to do with it. I have heard the following line—

What mortal eloquence can raise —.

sung thus :—‘What mortal el—What mortal el—What mortal el ;—What mortal el—o—quence——.’

Beck.

To laugh were want of goodness and of grace,
And to be grave exceeds all power of face.

Jones. Gentlemen, this is indeed no laughing matter.

Chard. False accents are perpetual.

Jones. Where the same strain occurs to three or four different stanzas in succession, these may be inevitable, without taking liberties either with the words or music ; but there is no excuse for such a fault in setting the first verse.

Chard. It is not uncommon to *start* with a false accent. Take the following instances, which I give from a work of some musical authority :—

Blest | are the | souls.
Lo from the | hills.
Jesús my | strength.

Are you satisfied ?

Jones. We don't want any more broken English, if that's what you mean. It is bad enough to have conjunctions, prepositions, adverbial endings, *et hoc genus omne*, accented; but to put a false accent upon the name that Christians fear to speak argues a want of reverence that nothing can palliate.

Chard. Mozart's exquisite duet, '*Ah Perdona*,' has been tortured into a *psalm tune*! The same liberty has been taken with the first strain of 'Softly sighs the voice of evening,' in '*Der Freischütz*;' nay, some country congregations have been edified with 'Drink to me only with thine eyes'!

Beck. Meanwhile, some of the finest compositions upon earth, written in the style *which alone* is proper for the church, lie neglected.

Jones. When the true sublime has been attained, men may forget it as they forget the sun, whose brightness is inherent; but such music, to those who know it, will be esteemed as a pattern of excellence to the end of the world.

Beck. Are your voluntaries good at the present day?

Chard. Great improvements have been made in English organs. We have now a long row of *pedals* to trot over. A sublime effect is given by the pedals to the '*Dead March*' in '*Saul*.' The organ cannot give the knock of the muffled drum, so it imitates the *roll*, which sounds like the muttering of distant thunder.

Beck. I wish I had had pedals. However, as it was, I could never *play the congregation out* with my 'Dead March' in 'Saul.'

Chard. Nor with anything else; at least the musical part of them. Old Sam Wesley was your only rival.

Beck. During the continental war, an officer belonging to a regiment for a short time quartered in Norwich, chanced one Sunday to attend St. Peter's Church. The churchwarden, an intimate friend of mine, admitted him into his pew. Soon after I had commenced the fugue in my first voluntary, the officer started up, quite electrified, and enquired 'who was playing the organ.' On being informed, he expressed his surprise that he should never have heard of me before. 'For,' added he, 'I thought I had heard all the great organists in this country as well as in many parts of the continent; but I do not remember this man's equal.' So long as the regiment remained in the city, that officer was to be seen every Sunday, either at the Cathedral or at St. Peter's Church; nor did he ever quit his place till I had played the last note of my concluding fugue, '*Fuimus Troes!*'

Chard. Cathedral choirs, too, might say '*Fuit ingens gloria Teucrorum.*' They have been wronged and mutilated (as an old friend of yours, Dr. Beckwith, has boldly told the world) by those very dignitaries whose duty it was to cherish and protect them,

and who now seem ready to catch at any pretence for getting rid of them *in toto*.

Beck. To whom do you allude?

Chard. To the Deans and Chapters.

Jones. Dr. Chard, have a care what you say.

Chard. I repeat it. The Deans and Chapters have impaired the efficiency of the choirs, and have tried (at least some of them) to do away with intoning the service. This was to have been the first step towards reducing cathedral music to a level with that in our parish churches.

Jones. Dr. Chard, I heard you with patience when you told me that my philosophy had had its day, and that my favourite treatise had been consigned to oblivion. But do not tell me, I beseech you, that this disgrace has befallen the Church of England.

Beck. Name a cathedral.

Chard. I might name you more than one; but the most notorious is *Bristol*. A minor Canon of that cathedral was virtually suspended by the Dean and Chapter for refusing to *read* the service, in direct violation, as he conceived, of his oath.

Jones. What could be their motive?

Chard. I had rather not tell you; it would only be giving you unnecessary pain. But the upshot of the whole affair was this:—The persecuted minor Canon and some of his brethren were at last constrained to appeal to the Visitor. Then the Chapter got frightened, and rescinded their order for *reading* the service.

The Dean, however (for some 'rush on, where angels fear to tread'), forbade the *intoning* upon his own responsibility. In pursuance of a citation from the Lord Bishop of the diocese, a chapter meeting was held. Dr. Badeley conducted the case for the appellants, and read the Dean and Chapter a lesson which they may by this time have forgotten, but which will not so soon be forgotten by the country.

Jones. Which way did the Bishop decree ?

Chard. In favour of the appellants ; and all the world now knows that Deans and Chapters cannot violate the chant without at the same time violating the terms of those statutes by which they hold their position ; and so forfeiting their rights, their privileges, and their *temporal property*. This the people of England will do well to remember.

Jones. It is provided by the statutes that a minor Canon must be *cantandi peritus*—a finished singer ; which no man can be, without having received a liberal education. This wise provision therefore secures the efficiency of cathedral choirs.

Chard. Instead of which we are now in danger of having minor Canons, incapable of singing, obtruded by favour. These men are to pocket emoluments for the discharge of duties which they must suffer to devolve upon illiterate hirelings.

Beck. Every lover of the art, to whatsoever church or sect he may belong, has an interest in preserving the integrity of our cathedral service. The triennial

festivals may do somewhat to prevent the degeneracy of music; but even these owe their origin to the Protestant cathedrals.

Jones. This is not a question of sect, or party, for music is not a party thing. We are indebted to such men as Bird, Tallis, Gibbons, Purcell, and Croft, for some of the finest compositions upon earth. The works of these men have stood the test of time, and owe their preservation to their excellence. To banish them from the cathedrals were to silence them altogether, and to deprive the musical world of a high standard of art. Moreover, the cathedral is a school for training up organists to the severity of fugue and canon. These men, by teaching, by mixing with the world, and by associating with professors of secular styles of music, serve in some measure to check that tide of innovation which is ever setting in from abroad, and deluging our theatres and concert rooms.

Mercury. Gentlemen, I have been an invisible auditor of your conversation, and have found it so pleasing and instructive, that I shall take some steps to make it known in the upper world. If anything could enhance your present happiness, I am sure it would be the consciousness that you were still serving that good cause to which your lives were so much devoted.

Beck. Thank you, good Mercury, and—hark, in your ear—you could not do the Church better service than by putting in a word for Chard's manuscript music.

REMARKS ON HAYDN'S 'CREATION';

INTENDED TO PREPARE THOSE WHO HAVE NOT STUDIED THE
RULES OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION FOR ENJOYING SOME
OF THE HIGHER BEAUTIES OF THAT ORATORIO.

*Published as a pamphlet shortly before a performance of the 'Creation'
in Norwich in 1849.*

PART THE FIRST.

A profound musical Critic has affirmed, that 'ever since instrumental music has been made independent of vocal, we have been in danger of falling under the dominion of sound without sense.' This is not the place for making invidious comparisons between vocal and instrumental music: we shall therefore be content with asserting, what we think will scarcely be denied, namely, that a combination of voices and instruments is superior to either taken separately; and that when voices, accompanied by instruments, strive to reach the dignity of a sacred theme, by expressing the conceptions of genius in the native tongue of the singers and audience, the highest aim of

music is satisfied. Henceforth it becomes a question of degrees. We might have a better band, a better chorus, better execution,—but supposing these to be perfect in themselves, and the band and chorus justly balanced, and duly proportioned to the size of the building wherein they were to be employed, nothing more would be left to desire. We should be entitled to expect the highest gratification that music will be capable of affording us, till the hallelujahs of earth shall be exchanged for the hallelujahs of heaven.

An Oratorio is a kind of sacred drama, embracing effects of the most opposite character, but which are at the same time linked together by perceptible gradations, so as to be felt as parts of one common whole. Hence a song from an Oratorio always suffers when introduced into a miscellaneous concert.

The interest of an Oratorio depends in great measure upon the characters and the story ; so that it is of importance to have all the parts equally well sustained. Hence *one* superior singer, by throwing the others into shade, would rather produce want of keeping, than improve that general effect to which included effects should be subordinate.

The plan of the work before us is too well known to need explanation. Angels and our first parents are the persons ; Creation is the theme. Some notices of the musical treatment of this subject by Haydn may supply the place of a friendly critic at the elbow of the uninitiated. If they can be prepared for

particular effects, so as to comprehend somewhat of their nature, they will relish the performance infinitely more than they could do by hearing it in ignorance. We shall attempt therefore to give them a little guidance, starting with a few rough definitions, by the aid whereof we hope to be able to make ourselves understood.

The proximate elements of musical composition are,—Harmony, Melody, and Modulation.

Melody is an agreeable succession of single sounds, performed by a voice or an instrument.

Recitative is a species of melody, answering to narrative, or declamation, in prose.

Air is a kind of melody, resembling the metrical stanza; the strains or verses being regulated by measure.

Harmony is a combination of sounds heard together, as when a chord is struck upon a piano-forte.

Harmony may be either concordant or dissonant. *Discords* have been aptly termed *calls*; *concord*s, the sounds *called*. The former excite expectation, which the latter satisfy. Hence to end a piece of music with a discord, would be like leaving off speaking in the middle of a sentence.

Modulation is the passing from one key to another.

When we enter a key closely related to the one we quit, the modulation is said to be *natural*. When this relationship is distant, the modulation is called *abrupt*. This relationship itself depends upon the

circumstance that one and the same chord forms a part of several keys, to any one of which it may lead at the will of the composer.

Transition is the taking one key immediately after another, instead of proceeding by degrees.

A *Key* is that concord, with its call, which generally begins, and always ends, a piece of music. It is so important, that while it exists, all melody and harmony are felt as having relation to it, and absolute dependence upon it. For example, suppose 'God save the Queen' to be sung as a melody, with the omission of the last note, the penultimate note being repeated in its stead, for the sake of the word 'Queen.' Now, who would say the tune was finished?

Every key is in one or other of two *modes*; the *major* or the *minor*. The former has generally a cheerful, the latter a plaintive effect.

A *Cadence* is the discord that calls the harmony of the key-note, followed by that harmony. It answers to the full stop in language. When the fundamental bass, instead of going to the key note, rises a tone, or a semitone, the *cadence* is said to be *interrupted*, the ear being kept in suspense.

Imitation is, technically, a contrived resemblance between melodies succeeding each other in different parts of the harmony; but it also applies to music composed in imitation of natural effects; such as the rolling of thunder, the murmuring of water, the singing of birds, and so forth; when the composer, like

the poet, but with far greater resources at command, makes the 'sound an echo to the sense.'

Having thus prepared the reader, we proceed to our remarks.

The Oratorio opens with an instrumental picture of Chaos. Much nonsense has been written about this introduction. In the bass are some staccato notes, which, a minute critic tells us, describe the 'picking up of the atoms' for the formation of the new world. If Haydn had such a conceit, it is puerile and unworthy of him. By chaos we understand a war of jarring elements, an incongruous battle of antagonisms, such as Ovid describes at the beginning of his *Metamorphoses*.

Haydn has availed himself of *harmony* to paint this state of things. Melody and modulation had savoured too much of order, and here all was to be confusion, yet not unstudied. Listen to the discords, wailing, and screaming for resolution. Call succeeds call, yet the concord does not come; when at length it comes, and order seems about to beam upon you, the sepulchral glimmer is extinguished by a series of discords more horrid than before, and night more profound deepens round you. Thus you are led through a labyrinth of sounds, till the scene dissolves in a low faint moan, the key (if key it may be called) being minor.

RAPHAEL interprets the music in a recitative of corresponding gloom, and immediately a chorus of

Angels announces the *brooding* of the Spirit upon the waters. How magical the change produced by the new major key, the rhythm of melody, and the *piano* chorus !

The magnificent burst upon the word LIGHT, speaks for itself. Uninstructed hearers, however, fall into the error of attributing the whole effect to the sudden *forte* of the band and chorus ; but in addition to this, the ear is startled by the composer's having taken a major chord where the minor one was expected.

URIEL'S air, 'Now vanish,' will be felt by all hearers as Haydn intended. It is a manifest struggle between light and darkness ; the former being expressed by sweetness of vocal melody, accompanied with instrumental arpeggios ; and the latter, by descending chromatic passages. At the words 'Af-frighted fled,' there is an abrupt modulation from E major to C minor. This modulation is here effected by a staccato passage, executed by instruments, in unisons and octaves ; an intermediate announcement of the key of A minor connecting the two remote keys. Discordant harmony drawn out into melody, and descending chromatic runs upon the instruments, depict the fall of the spirits of darkness into the abyss of night. *

Suddenly the key of A major heralds 'A new created world.' We wish to call particular attention to this chorus, because we do not remember another in the whole range of musical composition so well

calculated to enable a novice to feel its harmony as a distinct effect. The leading melody, sung by the sopranos, is sweet and simple ; just the kind of air to haunt one in the street, in the field, or in the silence of night. It is moreover short, and four times repeated, so that we have ample opportunity of attending to its treatment.

At first the harmony is natural, the vocal counter-point plain, the chorus singing *sotto voce*, while joyous bird-like passages from the flute give a sparkling animation to the whole. The strain is repeated ; again we enjoy the same bewitching melody sung by the sopranos, but we no longer listen to the same music. At the second bar the harmony is changed, and leads us to the cadence by a different route. We feel that we behold the same landscape, but a cloud is passing over it, imparting the charm of accidental light.

As yet this 'new created world,' like Thomson's 'trembling year,' is 'unconfirmed.' Accordingly the strain is interrupted by the distant yelling of the spirits of darkness, accompanying URIEL'S recitative. Again the chorus take up the dismal howl, accompanied as before by chromatic wailings. Order, however, soon prevails, and the sunny landscape returns upon us, as at first, in unsullied brightness. Yet once more, and for the last time, is the strain, 'A new created world,' repeated. At the second bar the cloud returns as before, but at the fourth, it emits a flash of summer

lightning. The chord of B minor in the third bar naturally leads to the governing call of the harmony proper to the key note, instead of which we have the chord of G *natural* startling the ear with a delightful surprise. The melody itself is now slightly altered, for the sake of introducing a discord, in order that the cadence may return with additional sweetness, and then the chorus ends with an exhilarating burst of unisons and octaves.

When we find a man of Haydn's genius thus laboriously fetching out the treasures of art, for the sake of adorning eight bars of melody, in a work of such extent as this Oratorio, we may well blush at the encomiums, which (begrudged to works stamped for immortality) we lavish on the fugitive trifles of the hour.

RAPHAEL'S recitative, which follows, is *narrative*, the instrumentation being *descriptive*; the words, therefore, merely interpret the accompaniment. Thus we have the whistling of the storm, the roaring of the thunder, the driving of the rain, the pattering of the hail, and so forth, depicted by the instruments.

The chorus and quartet, 'The marvellous work,' is sufficiently intelligible to all hearers. Haydn's choruses have neither the sublimity nor the learned contrivance of Handel's. Still they are very effective and elegant, from the singular beauty of the melodies.

The bass air, 'Rolling in foaming billows,' is introduced by a short recitative. The song begins in D minor. The divisions given to the second violins,

tenors, and basses, exhibit the tumbling of the waters. The voice goes up to F above the stave, to paint 'their tops into the *clouds*.' The winding of the rivers is expressed by the oboes, and short divisions by the first and second violins. The major movement, 'Soft purling glides,' is accompanied with some charming triplets by the first violins, and afterwards by an exquisite phrase of melody, taken up by the oboe and flute. The words 'through silent vales,' are sung upon holding notes, accompanied with a long holding note upon the horns, and a few gliding *minims*, executed *pianissimo* by the stringed instruments. This little bit is a perfect gem. That *sound* should give the perception of *silence*, is paradoxical, but nevertheless true. The murmuring of water had been imitated by sound in *motion*; the silence of the vale is described by sound comparatively at *rest*. This analogy may strike even the common hearer; but the languor, the pensive repose diffused by the *minor seventh* with which the harmony of the key note is accompanied, and by which that key is instantaneously destroyed, thrills the very blood of the musician. Not that it is an uncommon progression (it is quite the reverse), but because its employment then and there shows the consummate art of the master.

The exquisite canzonet, 'With verdure clad,' preceded by a short recitative, is next in order. The symphony opens with clarionets and bassoons obligato. The pastoral melody, which has always found an

echo in every bosom, needs no comment ; we shall therefore confine ourselves to some points less easily understood. The air is in B flat. At the words 'By loads of fruit * * are press'd' there is an abrupt modulation. The previous word 'plant' was in the key of F major, one flat ; the word 'pressed' is in D flat major, five flats. The two remote keys are connected by means of the intermediate key of B flat minor, through which the instruments pass in arpeggio. The next strain is in A flat major, and the next to that, in B flat minor, to prepare for a return to the original key. On the word '*brow*' the voice rises to G flat, and the note is accompanied with a discord (the diminished 7th) which shocks the ear, just enough to indicate the pain of the mountain's ascent. At the words 'closed wood,' the closeness of the minor chord, and the rapid iteration of the notes, paint the umbrageous confusion and density of a sylvan labyrinth. When the voice repeats the original air, we find ourselves translated again to the breezy, healthful, open country.

In the chorus, 'Awake the harp,' will be found some of those technical imitations before defined ; particularly at the words 'For He the heav'ns,' &c.

We are now come to the famous recitative, 'In splendour bright,' descriptive of the rising of the sun and moon. Much fanciful criticism has been written upon this imitation. Colours have been likened to sounds ; and it has been said, that the distinctive

tones of the instruments successively employed, represent, and even resemble, particular colours, with the order in which they usher in the dawn. Dismissing this learned trifling, we will confine ourselves to what we know to have been actually done. The rising of the sun is depicted by the diatonic scale of D major, in semibreves, going from D on the fourth line of the stave to the F sharp, a tenth above ; the scale being given to the flute, an instrument, perhaps, superior to all others in combined delicacy and space-penetrating power. The harmony is a masterly accompaniment of the scale. The first violins are in unison with the flute. The scale begins *pianissimo*. The second violins come on in unison upon the half bar, and at the beginning of the second bar *discord* with the first violins and flute, the resolution taking place on the last half of the bar. The beautiful discords of suspension between the first and second violins, represent the struggling shades of darkness, which the sun disperses as he mounts. At the third bar, the violoncellos steal in ; then the double basses and tenors ; then the bassoons and oboes ; then the horns ; till, at the tenth bar, the whole band, *fortissimo*, announce the culmination of the sun of harmony.

The rising of the moon is, if possible, even more beautiful. The scale commencing with G, as a new key note, on the lowest line of the stave, is assigned to the double basses and violoncellos. The pensive modulation and the grave sound, aided, no doubt, by our

own foreknowledge, and the mysterious faculty of association, seem to realise the dream that it is indeed the Queen of night. The chromatic progression at the third bar, the *piano* observed throughout, the absence of wind instruments, and the sweetness of the vocal melody, which has more the character of air than properly belongs to recitative, contrasted with the gorgeousness of the preceding instrumentation, render this one of the most charming musical pictures ever painted. A spirited *allegro* delineates the 'Host of radiant orbs,' whose numbers are indicated by rapid semiquavers on the stringed instruments.

The first part of the Oratorio ends with the grand chorus 'The heavens are telling.' Haydn has done nothing to disturb the supremacy of Handel in choral writing. Unable to reach the greatness of Handel's musical subjects, he showed little of the learned contrivance with which they are treated. Instead, therefore, of adopting the model of Handel, he wisely employed a style of his own. He depends for his effects upon the exuberance of his fancy; upon his power of wielding an improved band; upon his command over the resources of harmony and modulation; and upon the striking potency of contrasts. 'The heavens are telling' furnishes us with a good example. The chorus is in C major, the leading melody being sweet and simple, consisting of a regular strain of eight bars. As an opposition to choral volume, we have the elegant trio, 'The day that is coming.' When we are

told of the 'night that is gone' the minor mode is adopted. In the 'following night,' the *interrupted cadence* upon the word *night* is very effective. The chorus comes in with a startling transition to the original major. Then we have the charming trio, 'In all the lands,' with its beautiful legato passages for the wind instruments ; though, if we remember rightly, similar passages occur in the overture to Handel's Occasional Oratorio. The chorus at the *piu allegro* is worked up with much fire. The chromatic descent of the bass, towards the climax, and then the rushing of the stringed bass instruments up to B flat, B natural, C natural, C sharp, and D, have an extremely fine effect, and carry the audience by storm.

PART THE SECOND.

HAVING been somewhat copious in our remarks upon the first part of Hadyn's great work, we will avoid tiring the reader unnecessarily, by passing over the remainder of the ground as rapidly as we can. The symphony to the song, 'On mighty pens,' is bold and eagle-like in its flight, and therefore proper for the subject ; the accompaniments to the voice are also highly imaginative. The key is F major. The lark is introduced by the clarionet ; the cooing of the dove imitated very happily by the bassoons ; and the warbling of the nightingale, by the flute. Thirty-five bars, towards the close of this song, are usually cut

out ; either for the sake of brevity, or for the better reason that Haydn had unluckily wandered into the doleful key of *G minor*, whilst telling us that the nightingale's lay had *not yet* been tuned to a 'mournful tale ;' but this is a mistake composers are apt to fall into, by attending to the meaning of particular words, rather than to the general scope of the sentence. Recit., 'And God created great whales.' The sporting of these monsters is depicted by violas and basses.

Terzetto, 'Most beautiful appear.' The vocal melodies are exquisite. The 'Gently sloping hills' are described by undulating divisions in thirds for the first and second violins. 'The fountain,' by the bassoon ; whilst the violins 'distil in crystal drops.' The 'cheerful' host of 'birds,' by the flute. The 'flying whirl,' by scintillating passages taken up in quick succession by various instruments. The 'up-heaving' of 'Leviathan,' by violoncellos and double basses. In short, we have only to bear in mind that the composer's aim here is to make 'the sound an echo to the sense,' and then the words will be a key to the accompaniments.

Chorus, 'The Lord is great.'

Recit. RAPHAEL—Creation of the 'living creature after his kind.' We have the roaring of the lion admirably imitated by the stringed instruments. Then the stealthy pace, the leap, and finally the spring of the 'flexible tiger.' The bounding of the 'nimble stag ;' and the neighing of the 'sprightly steed.'

After which an extraordinary transition is made from the key of D flat major, five flats, to that of A major, three sharps. The new key begins, *andante*, with a pastoral flute solo introducing the 'cattle in herds.'—After which we have the 'whirl' of a 'host of insects,' and the long 'sinuous trace' of the 'worm,' portrayed with wonderful spirit and truth.

'Now Heaven in fullest glory shone,' a superb song, replete with dignity and grace, in D major, with a splendid blaze of accompaniment. The air stamps itself upon your memory and haunts you when you get home. It is bold, clear, and decided. 'By heavy beasts the earth is *trod*.' The B flat of the inverted chord of G minor, by the bass instruments upon the word '*trod*,' is like the tramp of a Megatherium. The repetition of the sentence takes us into the key of F major. 'There wanted yet'—upon the word *yet* a grand discord *calls* for the 'wondrous being' about to be created; then we have a return to the original air slightly varied and thus rendered more attractive. 'God's power admire'—the last time these words occur, the voice has C *natural* to the word '*power*,' and the brief destruction of the key, besides its fine pathos, gives sweetness to the succeeding close.

Recit. 'And God created.'—'Male and female created he them.' Haydn has accompanied the first introduction of the word *female* with a *discord*. His own marriage was certainly unlucky, but did he mean to insinuate * * *? even if he did, he has made ample

amends in the song that follows, so we trust most ladies will forgive him.

'In native worth'—a charming canzonet in C major. At the words 'in his eyes with brightness,' the flute expresses the sparkling glances. 'Image of his God'—the triteness of the modulation into the key of G, is taken off by the previous discord of the diminished 7th (inverted) resolved upon the chord of the sixth and fourth. This resolution was less common in Haydn's time than now, but it must always be enchantingly sweet. The next time the words are repeated, there is an abrupt modulation into A flat major, from which the composer escapes by carrying his symphony through C minor, and then the air recommences in the original major key. 'Of flowery spring the mirror,'—the announcement of D minor gives a feminine grace to the arpeggios.

Chorus—'Achieved is the glorious work'—attend to the technical imitations at the words 'In lofty strains,' and so forth.

Trio—'On Thee each living soul.' We should call this the gem of the Oratorio, were there not so many other gems of the first water in it. 'With sudden terror they are struck.' At the word *struck*, the stringed instruments paint this terror by replications of triplets. We are now hastening into the valley of the shadow of death. 'They vanish into dust.' The key is G flat. 'Thou takest their *breath away*.' Here the mysterious effects of the tempered scale oppress

our spirits. No sound accompanies the voice but a low soft shudder from the strings. The wind instruments are as idle as the crew of a merchantman becalmed ; and well it is that they are so, for little could they do in this remote, untrodden region,—the key announced being *C flat minor with ten flats* ! A writer of the present day would be tempted to cut the knot and slip into three or four sharps by taking advantage of the enharmonic change. Not so, Haydn ; he travels to his primary key by a more legitimate route. ‘ They vanish into *dust*.’ Again the key of G flat, whence the road home is open through the related key of E flat minor. ‘ Life with vigour fresh returns.’ A breeze springs up filling the sails of our craft,—and giving activity to horns, bassoons, clarionets, and flute. All is life and joy through the remainder of this charming trio. The second part of the Oratorio ends with the grand chorus ‘ Achieved is the glorious work.’

PART THE THIRD

Opens with a Terzetto, in the key of E major, for three flutes, accompanied by stringed instruments and horns, leading to the Recit. ‘ In Rosy mantle,’ and descriptive of the freshness and purity of morning. Let the reader run his thoughts back for a moment to the picture of Chaos, and compare it with the elegant melodies of this introduction ; he will then be struck with the differences of style that may properly have

place in the same Oratorio.—At the 17th bar of the voice part there is a pretty phrase for the horns, which is taken up by the bassoons at the 22nd bar, and at the 27th by the oboes. The Recit. is followed by the magnificent hymn of Adam and Eve, 'By Thee with bliss.' It is a duet in C, the time being *adagio*. The vocal melodies are simple and impressive, with natural harmony. The accompaniments are supposed to be performed by angelic harps, and therefore are constructed of arpeggios, proper to that instrument, intermixed with obligato passages for the oboe. At the 24th bar, the Heavenly Host, as if carried away with the fervour of the theme, mingle their voices with those of our first parents. Oboes, flute, and bassoons now help to fill up the chords, which nevertheless preserve their harp-like character. At the words 'this world so great,' the drum comes in solo, with a *piano* roll. Such is the effect, that a mind striving to *realize* the scene, and the subsequent fall of those happy beings, might well be overcome by excess of emotion, and constrained to find relief in tears.

The subject of Adam's solo at the *allegretto* in F, is one of those melodies that intrude themselves unbidden long after they have ceased to vibrate in our ears. It seems, too, to have been an especial favourite with the composer, for he has introduced it in three different keys and lavished much rich accompaniment upon it. In sooth, it is passing sweet. The chorus

breaks in upon the solo, which is afterwards taken up by Eve at the words 'And Thou that rulest'—with the addition of a few feminine graces to heighten the charm. Then Adam—'Ye strong and cumbrous elements,' accompanied by oboes and brilliant divisions on the flute. Adam's solo modulates into *A flat major*, in which key the chorus breaks in at the words 'Resound the praise.' Then Eve has the original melody, but in the key of *A flat*, at the words 'Ye purling fountains.' Adam's next solo, at 'Ye that lowly creep,' has a passage imitating the action, by the basses. This solo has a good deal of modulation, going as far as *G flat*, six flats. The words 'Ye living souls extol the Lord,' are in the key of *E flat minor*, six flats. The chorus comes on in *F minor*, whence it makes a *transition* into *G minor*, at the words 'Him celebrate.'

After this little bit of chorus Adam and Eve blend their voices in duet, the latter singing the sweet melody so often mentioned, but in the key of *G*; the fine chorus, 'Hail, bounteous Lord,' comes in upon the last cadence.

We shall not fatigue the reader by going through the modulation of this chorus. At 'We praise Thee now,' there are some technical imitations which may be easily caught, even by an unpractised ear. But we call close attention to 'Thy power adore the heaven and earth,' sung *piano* in *unisons* and *octaves*, accompanied by *arpeggios* upon the chords of *C minor*

and *A flat*. It is the heavenly choir—'Hark, now I hear them!' hymning and sweeping their seraphic harps! Celestial music!

We have next a *recit.* by Adam, 'Our duty we performed'—in which there is a good deal of modulation. Eve takes it up in the key of *G flat*, upon an *interrupted cadence*, passing through *D flat* and *A flat*, to the key of *E flat*, to prepare for the duet that is to follow. This course of modulation, being brilliant, gives a spirited effect to the run up to *A flat* upon the word 'Pride;' as well as joyousness to the 'Happiness' which succeeds.

The duet, 'Graceful consort'—depicts the serene and healthful joy of pure conjugal affection. The exquisite tenderness of the melody, touched, as it is, with a shade of that pensiveness which seems inseparable from all human bliss, and the surpassing elegance of the accompaniments, render this one of the most charming compositions imaginable. It needs no comment. If you say, with Erasmus, '*Fac ut sentiam,*' we reply with Erasmus, '*Eadem opera fac ut sentiat adamas.*' We are writing for beings born of flesh and blood, not to stocks and stones. So much for the first movement. The *allegro* is the bounding and dancing of two grateful hearts in their satisfied moments. The voices are encouraged by animating phrases from the clarionet, oboe, and flute; till, at the words 'Is every joy enhanced,' 'Delight is ever new,' there is a burst of rapture from all the wind

instruments. This movement is long, and generally cut down, we suppose, for that reason.

After a short *recit.* we have the final chorus 'Sing the Lord.' At the *allegro* there is a double subject, the second subject coming in under the fourth note of the first; subsequently the two subjects are introduced simultaneously in another key. There is also much technical imitation, Haydn having shown more learned contrivance here than in any other part of the Oratorio. But an analysis of the treatment would carry us far beyond the object of our light criticism; we shall therefore only add that this chorus is attractive in its fine general effect.

Our task is now done. We had intended to give some broad results, but these the reader must deduce for himself, as we have already much exceeded our prescribed limits. We have not done so well as we wished, but as well as, under all circumstances, we could; such information as we had to bestow having been derived solely and faithfully from personal study of the full score, and from Clementi's arrangement, which had the express approbation of our illustrious composer.*

* We have all along quoted the old words—doggerel that out-Brady's Brady, and out-Tate's Tate.

HANDEL'S HALLELUJAH CHORUS.

[An analysis ; written in 1853 for the Author's friend, the late Mr. Surman, and published in 1854 as a preface to the Exeter Hall edition of 'Surman's Handbook Oratorio, "The Messiah."']

'THE MESSIAH' is much too wide a field to expatiate upon within the limits of a mere prefix ; but perhaps a popular analysis of the 'Hallelujah Chorus' will throw some light upon Handel's unrivalled greatness as a choral writer, and also assist the reader to appreciate the excellences of some other parts of the oratorio.

Handel seems to have thought less of himself, and even of his art, than of his poem and of his audience. He considered himself as appealing less to musicians than to mankind, through a medium which was part and parcel of his nature.

This appears from his reply to Lord Kinnoul, who had complimented him, soon after the first performance of the Messiah, on the noble entertainment he had just given the town. 'My Lord,' said Handel, 'I should be sorry if I only entertained them ; I wish to make them better.'

But it appears even more clearly, from the evidence

afforded by his works, as we proceed to instance in the case of the 'Hallelujah Chorus.'

After an announcement of the subject in three bars for the stringed instruments, it is taken up by the voices, iterating the word 'Hallelujah.' Nothing can be more simple than the melody. He who hears it for the first time is conscious that he has never heard anything like it, and that it can form no part of any other composition without being instantly recognised and restored to its rightful owner. Having no resemblances, no associations, it is necessarily exempt from the slightest taint of vulgarity. It is withal so easy of execution, and lies so well for the voices, that the youngest singers in the chorus can throw their hearts and souls into it. The harmony is equally simple, glowing with the common chord. When the audience have been wrought into a state of excitement by this jubilant outbreak, it is suddenly arrested that they may hear the reason for it, and feel the solemnity of it: 'For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' This forms a new musical subject, given out in unisons and octaves. So startling is the effect, that (we are told on the authority of Lord Kinnoul) at the first performance of the Messiah, the king, who happened to be present, and the whole company rose, as one man, and remained standing till the end of the chorus. Then the Hallelujah returns, accompanied, however, with drums and trumpets in addition to the strings; and invested, by the chastened feeling of the audience,

with a kind of religious awe. After this the second subject is repeated, followed as before by the Hallelujah. By this alternation the two subjects are indelibly stamped upon the mind, so that even the common hearer is prepared to feel and understand them when taken in conjunction. The second subject, 'For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' is then led off by the trebles, the other parts, beginning with the tenors, consecutively taking the subject of the Hallelujah under it. Here again we see the consummate tact of the composer, in addressing himself to *the people*. The uneducated ear generally recognises only the highest melody; had the lead been given to an inner part, its effect upon the *general audience* had been lost; but Handel well knew that the Hallelujahs might be safely left to take care of themselves; that by making them subordinate the audience would feel the two subjects simultaneously, endowed, as it were, by art, with more ears than nature gave them; and that, when the lead afterwards fell to the tenors and basses, it would be distinctly felt as an independent melody, even below the ringing of the Hallelujahs, the thunder of drums, and the fanfare of trumpets. By way of contrast, we have next a picture of this beneficent reign in a strain of heavenly sweetness. The turbulent rule of the Prince of the air has been overthrown, and 'the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.' At the words '*of this world*' a charming effect is pro-

duced by a progression known to musicians as the hypodiatonic cadence of Mercadier de Belest. A new subject then announces the eternal durability of the Saviour's throne : 'And He shall reign for ever and ever.' It is a plain and noble fugue lead, delivered by the basses in what is technically called the plagal mode, and answered in the authentic mode by the tenors. The free accompaniment to the words 'for ever and ever,' having the character of the Hallelujah melody, not only preserves uniformity in the composition, but tells upon the audience, because they have been prepared to follow and to feel it. And now we have a proclamation of the titles of the Almighty King, heralded, trumpet-tongued, by the trebles and altos, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.' All this is done by the iteration of a single note. The titles are thrice proclaimed, the voices rising a fourth the second time, and then ascending gradually to like notes upon the trumpet, and accompanied by Hallelujahs, till they have drawn the mind upwards to the skies, and we are ready to sink under the force of the expression. Mark the effect of the holding note in the pauses between the Hallelujahs. Observe too, that Handel has here, for the first time, taken advantage of the modulation. We say *taken advantage*,—he does not *seek* it, but falls naturally into that train which the melody suggests. It does not drag you away, but it forces you along ; you are chained to the flaming car of Elijah. The remainder of the chorus

is one bright effulgence of glory. *He who could stand it with an equal pulse and an unmoistened eye, may be both a wise and a good man, but assuredly has no sensibility for music.*

It might have been thought that one such effort as this would have exhausted the mightiest human genius, had not he who wrote the 'Hallelujah Chorus,' afterwards equalled, if not transcended it, in the same Oratorio, by his 'Worthy is the Lamb.'

It is instructive to compare the grandeur of Handel's effects with the poverty of his means ; to contrast *his* meagre bands with the appliances of the modern orchestra, and then to reflect upon what he has done.

The secret lies in a nutshell. He made the profoundest musical learning subservient to the higher beauties of expression. He never suffered petty details to interfere with the breadth of his colouring or the severe majesty of his outline. He knew that forced consecutions, abrupt modulations, close intervals, and chromatic progressions, can never kindle popular enthusiasm. Hence his greatest works are still as fresh as when the ink first dried from his pen.

But the dignity of Handel is twofold ; he has dignity of treatment, and dignity of subject. The former may be profitably studied and rationally explained, the latter can only be regarded with that mute reverence which is due to the creations of genius.

A SELECTION

FROM THE MUSICAL ARTICLES WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN
THE 'NORFOLK NEWS' AT VARIOUS TIMES FROM JANUARY
11, 1851, TO DECEMBER 11, 1869.

The selection consists of complete articles on some of the Great Works of Handel, and extracts from reviews, notices of concerts, &c. For convenience of reference the extracts are given under appropriate headings, and those on the same subject are placed together.

FESTIVAL MUSIC.—ACIS AND GALATEA.

WRITTEN DURING THE REHEARSALS FOR THE NORWICH MUSICAL
FESTIVAL OF 1854.

I.

THE chorus were last week employed with this refreshing music, to which they went like the 'hart' to the 'water brooks.' As this charming 'Mask' is now seldom done here, it may be worth while to make some attempt to prepare our readers for enjoying its beauties at the approaching festival.

The overture consists of only one movement, in the same key as the chorus to which it leads, and for which it prepares the audience. After a cheerful subject of ten bars for the strings, there is a flowing duet for the oboes, moving in thirds, the strings breaking

In at intervals with a striking arpeggio upon the tonic harmony. The piece is wrought out of these two subjects, the melody occasionally taking the *character* of the singular flute accompaniment to the song, 'O, ruddier than the cherry.' The overture ends with an adagio of four bars, finally reposing upon the dominant harmony of the relative minor. This creates expectation, and gives force, by contrast, to the jubilant symphony to the chorus, 'O, the pleasure of the plains!' This lovely chorus is a genuine gush of rural joy. The melody dances, sparkles, and bounds along like a mountain stream in the morning sun. The unisons and octaves at the words 'free and gay,' make the very heart leap; and the effect of the consecutive leads at 'dance and sport the hours away,' is delightful. At 'For us the zephyr blows' there is a movement in the relative minor, after which a *Da Capo* to the original subject in B flat.

The chorus is followed, after a short recitative, by Galatea's famous song, 'Hush ye pretty warbling choir.' Nothing can be more impassioned than the vocal melody, or more thrilling than the bird-like accompaniment for the piccolo; and the consummate tact with which subjects so opposite are blended together, and made to heighten the effect of each other, can never be sufficiently admired. This song has since been imitated in 'Say, little foolish fluttering thing,' but has never been equalled. Then Acis

has the song, 'Where shall I seek the charming fair?' The two flats at the signature in the old scores are apt to deceive the amateur as to the key. But it was the custom in Handel's time frequently to omit the last flat in the signature, and introduce it as an accidental. The song is in C minor, and depicts the sorrow and bewilderment of Acis in search of his love. Damon, a brother shepherd, arrests his steps with the song, 'Shepherd, what art thou pursuing?' Handel has given emphasis to the words 'heedless rushing to thy ruin,' by fine and natural syncopation. At the words, 'Leave thy passion till to-morrow;' this song has a conventional *quantum* of modulation, and then conventionally goes by *Da Capo* to the beginning. This was a sort of standing rule with composers of that date, and gave their songs somewhat of the formal air of the clipt yew-trees in their gardens. Audiences were thus somewhat unfairly entrapped into hearing the air twice over without the option or the credit of an encore.

The two songs that follow: 'Love in her eyes sits playing,' by Acis, and 'As when the dove,' by Galatea, are exquisitely impassioned. The melodies are elegant and expressive, and the plaintive oboe accompaniment is very beautiful, though not so independent as would be expected at the present day. But in Handel's time it was much the fashion to make some instrument go in unison with the voice. The lovers then meet, and pour forth their mutual

delight in the duet, 'Happy we.' The accompaniment moves in animating triplets in accordance with the character of the vocal melody, which, by the by, has some fine points of imitation. At length the chorus, catching the infection, and supposed to be transported at the sight of Galatea's beauty, take up the same subject, and make the groves ring with their rejoicing. The parts are so nicely balanced, and lie so well for the voices, that there is no excuse for imperfect articulation: moreover, the words, 'What joys I feel, what charms I see,' are so inimitably set, that the language is perfectly intelligible, however numerous the chorus. All is life, light, and joy. Yet how simple the means!—a few strings and a couple of oboes! But a sling and a stone, *wielded by DAVID*, could slay a giant armed in proof.

We believe a pause is usually made here; and here we, too, suspend our remarks.

II.

We are now arrived at the celebrated chorus, 'Wretched Lovers,' which is said to have first opened the eyes of the world to Handel's greatness as a choral writer. It is written in five vocal parts, the three intermediate parts being for equal voices, and accompanied only by strings and oboes. A century and a quarter have rolled away since Handel produced the effect he intended with this meagre band.

It is true he might have added horns, drums, and trumpets, and thus might have made louder noise ; but he was writing *pastoral* music, and so did not use them. He rejected even flutes, which he *might* have employed. Since that day the world has grown older and wiser, having made mighty strides. Not to speak of locomotives, electrotypes, photographs, and other physical marvels which do not apply, new musical instruments have been invented, and old ones so improved as to have become, in fact, new. We have not only enlarged our orchestras, multiplied our voices, and performed miracles with wood and brass, but have introduced harmonies and passed into modulations of which Handel, in his simplicity, perhaps never dreamed, though he was an innovator in his day. We have also had genius of first-rate order. Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Weber—to mention no others—have appeared upon the earth, and passed away, after fulfilling their mission and earning for themselves undying fame. Yet there stands Handel, with his ‘Wretched Lovers,’ his fiddles and his pipes, as he did at first, alone in his glory! We hear the chorus, and immediately feel that we never heard anything like it, no, nor approaching it, in that kind of music. Mozart had this feeling when studying the inspirations of Handel ; so also had Beethoven ; and those great men were not ashamed to own it. Whence is this, but that the gifts of Providence are

wisely rare in proportion to their magnitude? Europe has but one Mont Blanc.

Wretched lovers, fate has past
This sad decree—no joy shall last.

We are struck, at starting, with the emphasis given to the word '*wretched*' by syncopation. We admire the sweetness and easy flow of the melodies, so expressive of compassion and sorrow. We melt at the weeping pathos of the E flat by the first tenors, where the trebles fall a fifth, after the brief modulation into F from the original key of B flat; and the equal pathos of the E natural, when the trebles again fall a fifth to cadence in F. All this is obvious. But the vast musical learning concealed under these beauties is not quite so obvious. The first five bars for the second and third tenors move in canon. The first tenors and basses reply with a point of fugue. The mixture of equal voices allows the intermediate parts freely to cross or pass through each other without injury to the melodies, whilst close imitations and beautiful suspensions abound throughout. When the modulation comes on, it is

Wretched lovers, quit your dream,
BEHOLD!—the monster Polypheme!

The startling effect of the '*Behold!*' after a pause of all the voices, and the agitation of the chorus, moving in semiquavers to the words '*Behold the monster,*' &c., must arouse the most lethargic audience. But the first subject is never relinquished. We hear it

wailing over all by the trebles,* who no sooner leave it than it is taken up by the basses and then by the intermediate voices.

There is then a pause of expectation, followed by,

See what ample strides he takes—

The mountain nods, the forest shakes.

The words are here sculptured into syllables, that we may hear the very tramp of the giant in the isolated masses of sound. But this is not all. Observe the art of giving 'See what' to the first and second tenors, before the other voices come in. A concourse of people would not simultaneously notice the same thing—a *few only would notice and exclaim*, and then *all would exclaim*. The pauses between 'The mountain nods' etc., and the masses of sound which express the thing, are inimitably fine. This leads us to the climax—

The waves run frightened to the shores,

Hark! how the thundering giant roars.

The frightened waves are painted by rapid divisions and close imitations. 'Hark!' is an invitation to listen. The *harks*, therefore, are taken up successively, beginning with the basses and echoed by the other

* It seems to have been a rule with Handel, when he had two simultaneous subjects, one simple and the other complicated, to give the former first to the trebles, then to the basses, and lastly to the inner parts, as in the case of the 'Hallelujah Chorus.' His motive is obvious. Common audiences hear little more than the extreme parts, attending mostly to the highest melody. The composer, therefore, *forces* the inner parts upon them, thus making them hear with more ears than nature gave them.—*Author.*

voices, while the basses and instruments describe the roaring of the giant. Mere words, however, are inadequate to convey an idea of the effect, though they may prepare the mind, in some degree, for enjoying it. Enough to say that the thundering of the giant and the contagious excitement of the chorus act electrically upon all who have any souls for music, and transport them awhile out of themselves.

Having dwelt longer than we intended upon this magnificent chorus, we must reserve what we have further to say till next week.

III.

After the chorus 'Wretched lovers,' Polypheme sings the recitative and air 'O ruddier than the cherry,' which has been heard at a former festival as a concert song. But it owes much to its connection with the story. It is, indeed, a love song, but the love song of a monster, striving to be graceful and unable to avoid being uncouth. Ponderosity is given to the voice by the artful flute accompaniment, with which it forms a striking contrast; the latter being light and brilliant throughout. This effort of Polypheme being unsuccessful, and his overtures repulsed by Galatea in a conversational recitative, he sings, 'Cease to beauty to be suing,' a song more congenial to his character. Damon, a shepherd, then addresses him in the air 'Would you gain the tender creature'—an elegant and persuasive melody.

Acis, stung with jealousy, gives vent to his rage in 'Love sounds the alarm.' This song is none the less warlike and spirited for its simple oboe accompaniment. The shepherd has but his pipe wherewithal to animate his courage, but it is enough. The melody has drums and trumpets in itself, and the arpeggios, where the voice holds on, are extremely effective and beautiful. Clori then advises Acis in the charming air 'Consider, fond shepherd.' Here the subject is a musical exaggeration of what would be the natural inflection of the voice in simple declamation—a thing attempted more or less by all composers in recitative, but seldom achieved in air, unless by genius of the highest order. This song is followed by the trio, 'The flocks shall leave the mountains,' than which nothing finer was ever written. The murmured passion of the lovers, and the savage fury of the giant, are inimitable, taken independently; but heard, as they are together, each heightening the effect of the other by the power of contrast, and forming a delicious whole, they excite the liveliest emotions, and fill us with admiration of the consummate skill of Handel. The rock is then supposed to be hurled; and Acis shrieks for help in a short recitative, the accompaniment to which paints his death.

We have then the chorus 'Mourn all ye Muses'—a sweet and passionate ebullition of sorrow. Handel evidently had this chorus in his thoughts when he wrote his 'Mourn ye afflicted children,' as an opening to

'Judas Maccabæus.' Upon the whole we prefer the former. The grief may be more profound in 'Mourn ye afflicted children,' but what it gains in depth it loses in tenderness. 'Mourn all ye Muses' is in F minor, though there are only three flats in the signature. The pensive modulation to A flat major at 'Tune your reeds to doleful strains,' gives effect to the discordant 'Groans, cries, and howlings' that follow, and 'fill the neighbouring shore.' At 'The gentle Acis is no more,' to the word '*more*' a major chord is taken where a minor one was expected, which gives the blood a thrill. Next time we have '*is no more*' unaccompanied, and *pianissimo* in the key of A flat major—then again in C minor. Then the 'groans' become more discordant, the diminished seventh being employed, with which Handel and his cotemporaries produced the greater effect because they reserved it for particular occasions. But the unaccompanied chords for the voices to the words 'No more! no more!' are sublime; producing a sensation, which it is not often the good fortune even of a Handel to call forth.

Galatea then sings the pathetic solo 'Must I my Acis still bemoan,' the chorus, the while, attempting to comfort her by reminding her of her divine power; all this is perfectly enchanting. The song that follows, 'Heart the seat,' by Galatea, combines the elegance of Haydn with the passion of Mozart. The abrupt breaking into recitative at 'Rock, thy hollow

womb disclose,' for the transformation of Acis into a fountain, relieved Handel from the conventional modulation and *Da Capo*, which were the besetting sin of his day; hence, this is one of the least mannered of his songs. The accompaniment throughout is a subdued murmur, imitating the gurgle of running water.

The 'Mask' ends with the chorus, 'Galatea, dry thy tears.' Handel rises with his subject to the last, so that this cheerful and picturesque chorus suffers nothing from a remembrance of the beauties which preceded it. There is a freshness in the melodies which renders them ever new. The words 'Shepherd's pleasure, muse's theme,' are exquisitely set. It is the poetry of pastoral life. At 'Murmuring still thy gentle love,' the accompaniment to 'Heart the seat,' is distributed among the voices, and we hear the sound of many streams, 'murmuring still thy gentle love.' Thus ends the 'Mask,' a composition which shows that Handel could be as great in the tender as in the sublime; and which, had he written nothing else, would alone have rendered him immortal.

It is almost superfluous to add, that the words were written by Gay, and that the story is told in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses.'

ISRAEL IN EGYPT.

As the public will soon have an opportunity of hearing this great work performed by the Choral Society, a few particulars concerning it, which are not generally known, may be welcome to musical readers.

We learn from M. Victor Schœlcher's valuable life of Handel, that this oratorio was composed in the incredibly short space of twenty-seven days! It was not, however, begun and written to the end exactly in the form wherein it now exists. M. Schœlcher says '*The Exodus* (which is now the second part of *Israel in Egypt*), was written between the 1st and 11th of October' (1738). 'The first part was commenced on October 15' (and took to November 1 of the same year). 'If we consider, then, that what is now the second part is not called an act in the MS., we are tempted to believe that the author had originally the idea of composing 'The Song of Moses' for his own satisfaction only, and without any premeditated design—at any rate without determinate end. Perceiving afterwards that the description of the plagues of Egypt would be a fine subject to treat, and would make a beautiful introduction, he set to work four days afterwards and cast the whole into an oratorio. This hypothesis supports the opinion which, without certitude, attributes the choice of words to Handel himself, and it goes to explain why *Israel* is without

an overture. It seems to be still more plausible, when we remember that the work was only in two acts, and is principally composed of choruses, of which there are twenty-eight, whilst there are only five airs and three duets.'—P. 209.

Five of the choruses and two of the duets are taken from a *Magnificat*, which Handel had composed thirty years before, when in Italy. As for the words, like those of The 'Messiah,' they are derived entirely from Scripture.

After the first performance of this oratorio, Handel omitted some of the choruses, and inserted some Italian songs in their place—an example which has been quoted in justification of the liberties which have since been taken by others. But to this profanation his 'poverty,' and 'not his will,' consented. His 'Israel in Egypt' was as good as 'damned' the very first night—neither could any of these artifices save it. After three mutilated performances, it had to be withdrawn, though announced for a fourth night, and 'Saul' was done instead; added to which 'the famous Signor *Piantanida*' played a solo upon the fiddle!

Peace be with *Piantanida* and with the fiddle of *Piantanida*; for, whatever their merits, they were quite good enough for their audience. 'Israel' was not written for the men of a day; certainly not for the men of that day. Enough that it is now striking its roots deeply into the heart of the people of England. Not only is it done to vast assemblages

in its original state, but hearers of all classes may be seen following the music with cheap vocal scores before them, the better to feel its effects.

In order properly to enjoy a work which appeals with equal force to the heart, the imagination, and the intellect, some little previous study is needed. We shall best guard against disappointment by ascertaining beforehand what it is that we have to expect. Now, there is one degree and kind of study whereof all are capable, and from which all might derive some advantage—a study of the Scripture text. Upon consulting the words we shall find that grief, horror, and finally triumphant exultation, are the dominant emotions; and that these emotions are excited by tremendous supernatural agency, the results of which are related with sublime simplicity. Music set to so lofty a theme can be good only in so far as it is appropriate. If it cause in us a more lively feeling of these emotions, and present us with a more vivid picture of the scene than would be excited by reading the story, or hearing it read, then, and not otherwise, has the composer proved himself to be equal to his task. The only exception is in the case of hearers whose physical organisation renders them incapable of deriving pleasure from musical sounds; such persons being as incompetent to judge as blind men to judge of colours.

Without pretending to go into anything like analysis, we may single out a few choruses, and touch

upon some leading points, by way of illustrating what we have said, and of indicating the path to be pursued by those who would enquire further.

Handel was unrivalled in the expression of grief, whereof we have a striking instance in the opening double chorus, 'And the children of Israel sighed.' Here the profoundest musical learning is made a mere handmaid to expression. The isolated words 'sighed,' 'sighed,' by the second chorus, under the leads 'They oppressed them with burdens,' by the first, have a pathos alike original and touching.

Men, under the influence of any strong passion, speak, not only with peculiar emphasis, but also with peculiar inflections of voice. In orators and actors, who have to address multitudes, the accents and inflexions are the same, but exaggerated. The musician, with still greater exaggeration, should aim at preserving the truth of these natural accents and inflexions. This is done with marvellous force in the chorus 'They loathed to drink.' Not only is the accent expressive of disgust, but two distinct natural inflexions are given, and carried on together through the intricacies of an elaborate fugue.

In the double chorus, 'He spake the word,' the instruments depict the buzzing of flies. The effect of this buzzing, between volumes of choral sound, at the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace, was similar to what might be expected from holding one's head in an empty sugar hogshead, when flies are in season.

This, and the fiery, impetuous 'Hailstone' chorus which follows, are short. Handel was no wire-drawer; he knew that violent excitement must necessarily be of brief duration, and therefore did not give his audiences time to cool. 'He sent a thick darkness,' also short, solemn, and terrific, is totally unlike anything else to be found in the whole range of musical composition. It cannot be said to be in any particular key, being really a collection of cadences in different keys, linked together by complicated and equivocal harmonies. Such music in ordinary hands would be wanting in distinctness and meaning. Handel, however, has preserved order by his pointed and rhythmical phrases of melody. His periods are simple and short. After a time the parts are introduced separately, the melodies becoming more varied, but still of decided character. Long holding notes, the lowest in the system of sounds, are heard under and between the melodies. These deep vibrations oppress the senses, compelling the imagination to realise, so far as fancy can, the ideas presented to the mind by the words. Hence it is obvious that the utmost pains should be taken to articulate the language and preserve the purity of the vowels; moreover, the time should be religiously kept.

In the brief chorus 'He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up,' the *rebu*ke is given *fortissimo*; the shrivelling up of the waters, *piano*; and to the alternation of loud and soft, common hearers attri-

bute the whole effect. If this were all, however, the effect would be poor indeed. Observe the art used to obtain a true *fortissimo*. We have eight real parts, but the notes lie in those parts of the scales which the voices can deliver most boldly. The intervals are all easy and truly vocal. The harmonies are grand and open, consisting of the chords of C, F, and C. When we come to the *piano*, descriptive of the shrinking of the waters, the ear is surprised with the chord of C *minor*, where that of C *major* was expected. Nor is this all; instead of a cadence in C *minor*, the ear is again surprised by a cadence in E *flat major*. We have then this majestic and awful rebuke in the key of E flat, followed by a *piano* cadence in G *minor*, and the drying up of the waters is complete. The contrast between *loud* and *soft* is heightened in both periods by the bass being *fundamental* in the former case, and *partly derived* in the latter.

It must be evident that remarks of this kind might be multiplied to almost any extent, perhaps without much profit. We have said enough to show that music of so high an order cannot be fully appreciated without some study. Yet it may be deeply felt by all those who have natural taste and a musical organisation. No one, however, should be discouraged if a first hearing should not satisfy the expectations which our observations are calculated to raise. It is the nature of high excellence to improve upon acquaintance. The oftener such a work as 'Israel in

Egypt' is heard, the more keenly will its beauties be enjoyed, because they will be better understood.

[*Extract from the notice of the Concert.*]

In the grand chorus, 'He led them through the deep'—and here only—Handel himself seems to have taken a wrong view of his subject. The instrumental painting gives one an idea rather of the maze at Hampton Court, than of a wild and howling wilderness. Handel's idea of a wilderness seems to have been that of a labyrinth, more than of a desert. The chorus which immediately follows, 'But the waters overwhelmed their enemies,' makes ample amends for the mistake, if mistake there be. Here we have the tumbling of the billows depicted to perfection; and the ferocious joy of the Israelites, shouting 'There was *not one, not one* of them left,' has something fearful in it.

In the ten bars of symphony with which the second part of the oratorio commences, Handel bespeaks attention to the song of Moses and the Children of Israel. He bespeaks it with a vengeance. In this sublime symphony, from which the composers of this generation might learn a valuable lesson, we have five major common chords, each in its three positions, in succession, the bass being fundamental. Each of these bold and sonorous harmonies takes the ear by

surprise, producing some such effect as consecutive explosions of cannon might have upon the nerves of a timid woman. The song itself first introduces 'The horse and his rider ;' after which the choruses rise with the subject till the final climax is reached. In the opening of 'The depths have covered them,' nothing can exceed the sweetness and solemnity of the melodies ; neither can anything be conceived more graphic than the conclusion of this short chorus. In 'Thy right hand, O Lord,' how startling is the transition to savage and victorious joy ! It is the devotion of gratified vengeance. Equally fine is the end of 'Thou sentest forth thy wrath !' the rage is so hearty, and has so much soul in it. In 'The people shall hear,' we have a transition to the extreme terror and melting away of the Canaanites, with the 'passing over' of God's peculiar people. This is the most difficult chorus in the whole oratorio. Some of the harmonies are awful, and make the hair stand on end. As for the final chorus, it throws all that has been written since Handel's day to an immeasurable distance. Well might such efforts wring from Haydn, Beethoven and Mozart, the honest confession that this man was master of them all !

[*Extract from the notice of the performance of Israel in Egypt, during the Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace in 1857.*]

The oratorio itself is remarkable in every respect. Nobody but Handel would have dreamed of presenting an audience with eight-and-twenty choruses in one connected work, thirteen of which follow each other in uninterrupted succession—save the break of silence between the first and second parts of the drama. To balance these, we have no overture—only one air in the first part and three in the second (written in anything but an *ad captandum* style), three duets, four bits of recitative, and a short soprano solo! Such unpromising ingredients have frightened the directors of musical festivals. They had not that confidence in Handel which he had in himself, and therefore, either shrank from doing ‘Israel in Egypt,’ or interpolated it with airs derived from other sources. They set up their puny judgments against that of the great master, rendered his greatest effort unpopular, and then argued that the work being heavy with all this lightening, no audience would endure it as it stands in the score. Whereas *they* had added the *weight which sank it*.

The performance of which we have to speak was grand beyond conception as a whole, the only weak points being those wherein the composer’s intentions were not religiously respected. If the long pauses

between the choruses were *necessary* in order to recruit the physical power of the singers, there remains nothing further to be said. This may have been sometimes the case, but we think not always. The effect of such breaks was in the last degree painful and disagreeable. It was like telling an audience, 'The next piece is in an unconnected key ; we must give you time to forget the last key.' Now, we would have urged the singers till they dropped, rather than have given them a needless moment. Handel pours out his phials of wrath one upon another in unbroken consecution, in order to heighten the terror by contrast. Hence his choruses are *short*—they are *double*—they are *fugued*—that the voices, *without resting, may have rest*. We will fortify our opinion by giving an instance. The 'Hailstone' chorus is a spirited *allegro*, of awful power. No sooner has the last chord ceased to vibrate than you hear the key-note *largo* and *piano*, in distinct crotchets, and then spinning itself out into a thread of sound, till gradual harmony and modulation have carried you into the gloom of profound darkness—a darkness exaggerated by the dazzling blaze of the 'fire' which you have just seen running 'along upon the ground.' This chorus of 'Darkness' ends with a *staccato* passage, and the next chorus, 'He smote all the first-born' begins with a *staccato* passage ; moreover, the last chord of the former chorus is the dominant harmony of A minor, with the tonic of

which the latter chorus commences. Can any musician in his senses believe that Handel would have thus artfully connected these pieces, if he had intended a considerable interval of time to elapse between them? To us this seems inconceivable and impossible. Their isolation (by silence) to our ears deprived them of half their beauty. The little that remains to be said by way of censure shall be said and done with. The chorus, 'He sent a thick darkness,' was not so effective as it might have been, for want of a more curt enunciation on the part of the basses and inner voices. It is by *staccato* singing over long holding notes by the instruments that the feeling of gloom is in great measure produced. The worst feature, however, was the barbarous *rallentando* at the end. True, it had an effect, but a very bad effect. Throughout the festival there were occasionally slight deviations from what we have been accustomed to regard as the traditional time of Handel. 'The people shall hear' is marked *largo*, and was taken too fast. At the passage 'Till thy people *pass* over,' the voices sometimes sang a *major* sixth instead of a *minor* sixth to the bass, in the upper melody, thus destroying the beautiful pathos of Handel. Upon the whole, however, the choruses went finely. The difference of opinion which has been expressed as to their general effect in all probability depends upon the different places occupied by the respective hearers. An amateur told us that 'he

never was more disappointed in his life than he was with the first part' of 'Israel in Egypt,' and that he 'never heard anything so magnificent as the second part,' a result which he attributed entirely to having been upon the ground floor under one of the side galleries in one case, and aloft upon the third gallery in the other.

The first chorus, 'And the children of Israel sighed,' was very fine. The expression of disgust in 'They loathed to drink,' was also striking; this feeling, first excited by wide and unusual intervals, is kept up by chromatic passages, which Handel never employed without a reason in his choruses. The buzzing of insects, in 'He spake the word,' was marvellously imitated by the strings. There is nothing truer to nature even in Beethoven's 'Pastoral Symphony.' With the exceptions we have named, 'The people shall hear' deserves high praise. It is one of Handel's most picturesque choruses, portraying fear, sorrow, the melting away of the Canaanites, their stillness, and the passing over of the Lord's people, all which points were kept in view.

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ALEXANDER'S FEAST.

HERE we have one of the finest odes in the English language, written by one of the greatest of England's poets, descriptive of the 'Power of Music,' and set by the immortal genius of Handel. Such words and such strains should cause the ears of every musician to tingle.

Although it would be an insult to the reader to suppose him unacquainted with Dryden's celebrated Ode, the music of Handel is probably not so well known. Yet there is, perhaps, no finer descriptive composition in existence. The overture is short, and in the style of Handel's day. The first recitative, 'Twas at the royal feast,' leads to the solo and chorus, 'Happy, happy, happy pair.' The melody is simple and sweet, as well as in perfect harmony with the sentiment. In the chorus a charming effect is produced by bits of duet between the soprano and tenor, and the breaking in of the other voices, as if in assent, on the word 'happy.' Then a recitative leads to the chorus, 'The listening crowd admire the lofty sound.' Whilst attention is absorbed by a lovely symphony for the stringed instruments, the soprani unexpectedly break in with the golden harmonies of the key. This chorus is short, but masterly throughout. The following song, 'With ravished ears,' abounds with those

long divisions which were in vogue in Handel's time, and which were perhaps intended to show off the powers of the singer. The holding notes for the voice against an independent accompaniment are still used, and will always be classical. After another recitative, we have a chorus in praise of Bacchus, which must always please by the sweetness and purity of its melody. Then 'the master' chooses 'a mournful muse' to 'check the pride' of the king. 'He sung Darius great and good ;' a beautiful air, which is connected by a recitative, with a chorus upon the same theme. In nothing is Handel greater than in the expression of profound sorrow. The words 'Fall'n from his high estate and weltering in his blood,' are set as *he* only could have set them. The air 'Softly sweet in Lydian measures,' was rendered famous in every English concert-room in Lindley's time, by his beautiful execution of the obligato accompaniment for the violoncello. The solo, 'War, he sung, is toil and trouble,' is wonderfully graphic and striking. The first part ends with the noble chorus, 'The many rend the skies,' which is too well known to need any comment.

The second part begins with symphony, interpreted by unaccompanied fragments of recitative. This and the following chorus, 'Break his bands of sleep asunder,' afford a valuable lesson. The power of sound is tremendous, and it is produced by the most

simple means. The voices have easy notes in the strongest parts of their respective scales ; sonorous instruments are employed ; and the harmonies are bold and open, consisting chiefly, if not entirely, of tonic and dominant chords. This chorus verifies the saying of Mozart, that ' Handel when he chose could smite like a thunderbolt.' After a short recitative, we have the noble bass song, ' Revenge, Timotheus cries.' According to Dr. Burney, Handel was as much superior to others in his bass songs as in his choruses. In the recitative following the bass solo introducing the ' Grecian ghosts,' the accompaniment happily depicts the flashing of the torches. The same may be said of the tenor song, ' The princes applaud.' ' Here,' says Clouet (quoted by Schœlcher), ' whilst the accompaniment sparkles with the confused and unequal glare of the torches, the song expresses truthfully the precipitation and tumult of the crowd, the rolling of the flames, and the living splendour of a conflagration.' The last chorus, however, is the crowning glory of this beautiful work. The four lines—

Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown ;
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down—

have four distinct musical subjects, each of which is singularly expressive of the words to which it is set. Each individual subject is first introduced as a solo, in order to stamp it well upon the mind of the

audience, and prepare them to follow it out through all the complications of its subsequent treatment. The subjects are heard with their replies, sometimes in one part and sometimes in another; and sometimes two, and even three, of these subjects are going on at the same time, yet the profound depth of learning which is shown throughout this wonderful chorus is always subservient to that vigor of imagination which appeals to the learned and ignorant alike. It is the prerogative of genius to trample upon difficulties, and to make those efforts, which would be impossible to ordinary men, seem to be the spontaneous effusions of inherent power.

JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

ON Monday evening there was a rehearsal of the choruses of 'Judas Maccabæus' at St. Andrew's Hall, to which the public were admitted on payment of a shilling a-piece. One great blessing attending a rehearsal is, that a man may drop in and enjoy the music, wrapped up in his great coat, instead of having to sit and freeze in an evening dress. He stands a chance, too, of meeting with congenial spirits, for people who pay to hear a rehearsal do it generally out of love for the art. We shall take this opportunity of saying a few words about the choruses, in the hope of profiting such of our readers as mean to attend the concert.

Most of the choruses in 'Judas' are short; for Handel, when he had hammered the iron to a white heat, knew better than to strike another blow. The first chorus, 'Mourn, ye afflicted children,' has much in common with 'Mourn, all ye Muses' in 'Acis and Galatea.' This is partly to be accounted for from the similarity of the sentiment, and even of the words. The famous chorus, 'See the conquering hero comes,' is transplanted from 'Joshua;' and the accompaniment to the air 'Rejoice, O Judah,' is borrowed from the 'Messiah.' This is a liberty which Handel took openly, and which he had a right to take.

The chorus, 'Mourn, ye afflicted children,' breathes the very soul of grief. It is written in the key of *C minor*. The passage in the relative *major* of E flat, at the words 'Your sanguine hopes of liberty give o'er,' has, to our feelings, unutterable pathos. The same may be said of the arpeggios to the words 'Your hero is no more, your father is no more.' It is worth while to mention that Mozart has transferred this lovely melody to the exquisite trio, 'Protegga il, giusto Cielo,' in his opera of 'Don Giovanni.'

The chorus, 'For Sion lamentation make,' is literally a 'storm of grief.' See the language, 'with words that weep and tears that speak.' Mark, too, the sobbing effect in the accompaniment for the bass instruments.

The next chorus, 'O Father, whose almighty power,' speaks for itself. The late Mr. James Taylor used to say that 'the first movement would make the finest

psalm tune in the world,' and that the *allegro* is truly 'a soldier's prayer.'

The short chorus, 'We come in bright array,' is martial and spirit-stirring. The same may be said of 'Lead on, lead on,' which is calculated to excite the enthusiasm of an audience to its highest pitch.

We have then the trio and chorus, 'Disdainful of danger,' which has always been considered a masterpiece. We are inclined to think that Handel intended the upper part for counter-tenor male voices, as it is rather absurd for girls and young women to be singing, 'We rush on the foe.'

The chorus, 'Hear us, O Lord,' which is rather long, is a fine piece of musical painting.

The second part of the oratorio commences with the chorus, 'Fallen is the foe.' The tenors and basses start in unison with a decided phrase of melody, constructed out of the chord of the key note, which is D minor. There is a tumultuous accompaniment, the spirit of which Mendelssohn has caught in the accompaniment to his 'Baal, we cry to thee,' but in all other respects the 'Baal' chorus is vastly inferior. At the words, 'Where warlike Judas wields his righteous sword,' we have a new and totally different subject, worked up into a short fugue of imitation. But the original subject is by no means done with. It bursts upon the startled ear, sometimes against the subject, and sometimes against the counter-subject of the fugue. The chorus ends with a climax of what we may venture to term volley-firing.

The long chorus, 'Tune your harps,' is delicious in point of melody, and it literally glows with harmony. Handel is said to have dictated this chorus to Smith, after the former had become blind.

The short chorus, 'Hail, Judea,' begins with the 'volley-firing.' It is bright and joyous in its character.

The chorus, 'Ah, wretched Israel,' comes on under a note spun out by the soprano at the close of a previous air. This is one of the effects in which Handel delighted. At the words, 'Fallen how low!' we have the same charming pathos as in 'Your Hero is no more.' But the circumstance that one chorus is in triple and the other in common time, produces sufficient variety.

After the song of 'Sound an alarm,' a thrilling effect is gained upon the entrance of the chorus, 'We hear,' by making the soprano sing a minor seventh over the tonic harmony. The hair is made to stand on end, and it is kept on end to the close.

The chorus, 'We never will bow down,' is supposed by an able critic to be one of the finest things that even Handel ever wrote. The first movement is a florid *andante* in C *minor*. The very fiddles seem to speak the words, 'never, never.' This movement is abruptly interrupted, and after a brief silence we have the words, 'We worship God, and God alone,' in the relative *major*, and in counter-point of the first of the five orders. It is a noble peal of ecclesiastical harmony which, says the critic just alluded to, 'almost

takes one's breath away.' After half a dozen bars, the altos continue the subject, under which the tenors have a florid counter-subject. Here the counter-point is double; that is, capable of inversion. For immediately after, the subject is taken by the basses, while the soprani sing the counter-subject over it. The dignity of the music never flags for a moment. The sublime effect above described is what Mendelssohn wanted at the words 'but the Lord,' in his 'Thanks be to God,' in 'Elijah.'

'See the Conquering Hero comes,' is too well known to need a word of comment. The chorus, 'Sing unto God,' abounds with brilliant divisions and enticing melodies. The setting of the words 'to crown,' where the parts seem to vie with each other in zeal, is singularly happy. The chorus, 'To our great God,' is perhaps of a less popular stamp.

The 'Hallelujah' chorus, with which the oratorio ends, is quite different in character from that in the 'Messiah;' and it has been well said 'properly so;' for in the 'Messiah' we have a divine and in 'Judas' a human triumph celebrated. The 'Hallelujah' of the latter is sufficiently bold and exhilarating, and the melody at the word 'rejoice' is delicious. So much for the choruses. Some may think that we have said too much, but the subject gives scope for a great deal more.

II.

IN our notice of last week we confined ourselves to the choruses of '*Judas Maccabæus*,' as the songs address themselves more immediately to the popular ear, and therefore less need comment. It may be worth while, however, briefly to call attention to the duet, '*From this dread scene*,' because it is something very different from the duets which pass muster in the oratorios of the present day. In the latter the voices generally rise and fall together, so that only one melody is heard, accompanied by thirds or sixths. In the duet '*From this dread scene*' (which is in the key of G minor), we have two distinct melodies going on at the same time, but unity of effect is preserved by imitations and by an interchange of the vocal passages. It is not to be supposed for a moment that this style of writing is peculiar to Handel, or even to sacred music. On the contrary, it is the test of a composer's skill in this kind of composition. This union of two melodies to form an agreeable whole, is to be found in the secular duets of Jackson and Arne, as well as in the delightful operatic duets of Mozart. Almost any dunce can string thirds and sixths together.

There are no fewer than nineteen airs, or songs, no two of which resemble each other, in '*Judas Maccabæus*.' Surely this shows astonishing fertility of invention!

Handel himself, however, did not use all the music which is written upon 'Liberty' in this oratorio at any one performance. He introduced sometimes one piece and sometimes another.

The song of 'Wise men flattering' has the peculiarity of being founded more on the arpeggios of chords than was the fashion in Handel's day. In this air, indeed, he seems to have anticipated that mode of writing, which was afterwards to be carried to perfection by Haydn and his successors.

Upon the songs we have this general remark to make, namely, their vocal melody is different from that of the accompaniment, and that the joint melodies, as in the case of the duet, contrast with and support each other. Let us take the air of 'Call forth thy powers, my soul, and dare,' by way of illustration. Here we have a bold phrase of a bass character for the symphony, totally unlike the ascending melody which is given to the voice. But this bit of symphony is really the accompaniment of the song. It is heard to trickle continually from the bass instruments, inspiring the singer and the audience. We cannot help its haunting us as part and parcel of the piece itself. Now, this again is not peculiar to Handel. It is really the test of a good composer. Every reader of taste must see how much better this sort of thing is, than the smothering of the voice with dry chords, or unmeaning arpeggios, as is too commonly done at the present day. Yet to show that we are not wedded

to age for age's sake, we will point out what we consider to be a great fault in the songs of Handel's time. We allude to the practice of tagging a certain number of bars to an air for the sake of introducing modulation, and then sending the singer back by a *da capo* to do all his work over again. We might also object to the length of the divisions and to the cut-and-dried character of some of the cadences; but we must pass on to the concert itself. Of this not much need be said. A performance is a thing which is heard to-day and forgotten to-morrow; but the music remains, and a musical analysis is, or ought to be, instructive.

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ODE TO ST. CECILIA.—MADAME CLARA NOVELLO.

Norwich Musical Festival, 1854.

THE morning ended with Handel's 'As from the power of mighty lays,' in the 'Ode to St. Cecilia.' Madame Clara Novello's execution of the solo threw all the previous vocalisation to an immeasurable distance, as Handel here did all the previous music. We do not remember to have had such singing at a Norwich Festival since the days of Malibran. It was perfectly simple and truly sublime. The truth of the intervals—the ringing volume of tone—the firmness of the lofty holding note under the ascending accompaniment of the trumpet, and the dignity of the

words, made the singer, for the time, almost super-human. Then came the chorus ; and when Handel had made the eyes water, the flesh quiver, and the breath grow short with the grandeur of his subject and the awful majesty of its treatment, then, and *not till then*, he brought in the *drums*, as a *reminder* that he had *not yet reached the climax* ! And so ended the first morning's performance.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPANIMENTS.—MOZART.

The first part of the concert consisted of Handel's 'Acis and Galatea,' with Mozart's additional accompaniments. Now Mozart was a man of most excellent judgment, and executed the task which, we presume, was imposed upon him (as in the case of the 'Messiah') in the best imaginable manner ; that is, he did no more harm than he could possibly help. But one great charm of 'Acis and Galatea' is its *simplicity*, and we therefore prefer it as Handel wrote it.

THE MESSIAH.

FIRST for Mozart's accompaniments. No one can object to the employment of trombones in the choruses, Handel would most certainly have used them wherever they are there introduced. With regard to the

employment of other wind instruments, there have been, are, and probably ever will be, two different opinions. We shall not argue the point, but will just take leave to remind our readers that they have not, though they may be told otherwise, the authority of Mozart's own approval for all that he has done. He did not write to *please himself*, but because he was *desired* by the Baron von Swieten. Some of his additions are allowed to be improvements, to others we shall never be reconciled. The flute accompaniment, for instance, to the song 'O thou that tellest,' divides attention with the voice, whereas the latter ought to be supreme. This, however, we could tolerate, though we do not like it, but the flute accompaniment to 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' is not to be endured. If it be urged that 'Mozart wrote it,' we reply, 'At the instance of a thick-headed Baron.' If the sweet tone, improved scale, and perfect execution, in the case of the modern flute, be advanced in its defence, we answer, in proportion to its being better it is worse. We mean, the nearer it approaches the beauty of the voice, so much the more does it detract from what ought here to be the absolute supremacy of the latter. Nothing should be heard but Handel's accompaniment for stringed instruments, which differ from the voice so essentially in quality as to throw it out in high relief. But even the strings should be touched with 'a religious softness;' we should *hear them*, without *thinking about them*. If they once subdue the voice,

how should the voice subdue the soul? By making the female voice omnipotent, Handel wisely trusted to the power of 'the sweetest sound in art or nature.' But sensibility and expression are needed. True. And if we do not find them in a woman, we should like to know where on earth we are to seek them.

MOZART'S REQUIEM.

THE performances of this morning end with Mozart's divine 'Requiem.' It was a proof of excellent judgment to reserve this work for the last. Had it been heard first, it would have enfeebled both the other pieces.* That our readers may the better enjoy this great work, we advise them to invest two shillings in Novello's edition, to which is prefixed an admirable critique by Mr. E. Holmes, the biographer of the wonderful composer. It will be found an amusing and invaluable guide, imparting the fruits without entailing the labour of study.

It is a lesson to this age of 'sound and fury signifying nothing,' to glance at the score of the 'Requiem.' There are neither horns, oboes, nor flutes. Even the trombones are very sparingly employed. Mozart, who wrote as well for acute wind instruments as any man who ever lived, has here deliberately discarded

* Spohr's sacred Cantata, 'God, Thou art Great,' and Mendelssohn's 'Lobgesang.'

them all. He knew that great effects must be produced rather by judicious selection than by multiplicity of means. What he gives us is music, not noise. And yet in the *Dies Iræ* we have a power of sound more crushing and overwhelming than the discharge of a park of artillery. This tremendous effect is produced by realising to the imagination, so far as music can realise it, the wreck and dissolution of the world. Little men, attempting things beyond their reach, are always complaining of the lack of means—their cry is for more instruments—for larger orchestras—for a multitude of voices—to do their business for them. But it requires a Goliath to wield a weaver's beam, while for a David a sling and a stone will suffice. It is somewhat singular that Mr. Holmes, who has criticised the *Dies Iræ* minutely, should have omitted to point out the artful and effective piece of close imitation by the tenors at the words *Quantus tremor est futurus*. This is a fine stroke, augmenting the agony and horror.

Mr. Holmes thinks that the *Dies Iræ* may be regarded 'as an opening in that new department of symphony music, choral and instrumental—dramatic, yet leaving the drama to the imagination—which Beethoven and Hector Berlioz have successfully brought before modern hearers.' He afterwards admits that Mozart 'used voices to accompany,' and thinks that by 'employing them often in this capacity he enlarged the scope of vocal effects, and greatly

extended the powers of both voices and instruments. Now, from this we beg leave to dissent. 'Symphony music, choral and instrumental,' was employed by Handel in 'He spake the word' in 'Israel in Egypt,' in 'Wretched Lovers' in 'Acis and Galatea,' and in many other choruses. 'Israel in Egypt' and the 'Messiah' are also 'dramatic, yet leaving the drama to the imagination'—that is, they leave it to the auditors mentally to supply the characters. That Mozart used 'voices to accompany' in any *other sense* than Handel so used them, we very much doubt. If he did, the 'Italians' had a right to be 'offended.' We presume that Mr. Holmes does not mean to deny that sound should be subordinate to sense. However freely instruments may be employed, if the sense be enforced, as it is by Mozart, the supremacy of the voices, which utter it, remains undestroyed.

: We shall only add that the 'Requiem' is not entirely free from secular passages. Mr. Holmes has pointed out one in the 'Lachrymosa,' at the words *Pie Jesu, Jesu Domine*, of which he truly says, 'there is a tone of melancholy farewell about this cadence, as if it exhaled the last breath of human passion.' By the by, there is a false quantity in this said 'Lachrymosa' which ought to be corrected. The word '*Huic*' is tortured into a dissyllable, without the least necessity, in Novello's edition.

BEETHOVEN.

From a Review of Pierson's 'Beethoven's Studies in Thorough-Bass,' &c

MR. PIERSON'S estimate of Beethoven's music accords so closely with our own, that we cannot resist the temptation to transcribe two or three of his remarks.

'The strongest characteristic of Beethoven's finest music is a vast strength of wing; his flight is that of the eagle, broad, rapid, bold, cloud-piercing; but he knew little of 'the angel's floating pomp,'—his mind was not filled with that sacred enthusiasm which is so palpable in the conceptions of Milton and Handel, and which bore them, as on seraphic pinions, to the very throne of sublimity. It may be that Beethoven's want of belief in theology gave to his Oratorio and his Masses that secular colouring which is observable in them; he is often both tragic and pathetic, as in his funeral marches, the overture to 'Coriolanus,' and many passages in the music of Egmont and Fidelio,—there is true solemnity in the introduction to the 'Mount of Olives,' and in the last chorus, 'Hallelujah,' there is such a glorious fire and intensity, that if Beethoven ever attained to the sublime, it is in this instance.' (Appendix, p. 32.)

Again,—

'The Sinfonia Pastorale is, perhaps, the most perfect and the most genial of all his works,—it is nature set to music.' (Ibid. p. 32.)

Again,—

‘It is for the artist to find out—for his own instruction—why Beethoven’s ninth Symphony is not such a favourite as several of the others ; why “Fidelio” is less popular than “Don Giovanni,” or “Der Freischütz ;” why the “Mount of Olives” is far less generally admired than the “Creation ;” why the “Adelaide” retains its power of attraction undiminished ; and what is the subtle charm residing in Beethoven’s symphonies, concertos, and sonatas ; a charm that has, hitherto, placed them beyond successful competition.’ (Ibid. p. 32.)

Mr. Pierson does not, like the mother of Sisera, return answer to himself, so we will venture to reply for him. It is MELODY, all-pervading melody, that constitutes ‘the *estro divino* of the real bard.’

Norwich Musical Festival of 1854.

ON Monday evening Mr. Benedict was down to conduct a rehearsal of Beethoven’s service in C. This ‘Service’ is no other than the ‘Messe,’ ‘Hymnen,’ or Mass, marked Op. 86 in the authentic catalogues of the composer’s works. It has been called a ‘Service’ and accommodated with English words, out of deference to the real or supposed prejudices of the public. This is much to be regretted. The Latin words *fit* better than the English, and at the same time contain no point of doctrine that would not be

subscribed to by ninety-nine out of one hundred Protestant sects.

We believe the chorus had not had half a dozen full rehearsals of this difficult music before they had to sustain the ordeal of singing under Mr. Benedict's baton. They went through their task, upon the whole, with much spirit and confidence. There was one passage that rather gravelled them in the 'Et Incarnatus;' we allude to the chromatic descent of the voices to the words '*sub Pontio Pilato*' in the Mass. We have no doubt the chorus will be drilled till they have this passage quite under command. For its own sake, however, it is not worth the trouble. Failure here would be disgraceful to the composer, rather than to the singers. The chromatic descent is not choral, and it was not wanted; for all this stir is made in simply telling us a *man's name*!

There is another difficulty, perhaps even greater, for the chorus, in the eighth bar of the 'Sanctus.' This, too, will have to be got over by drilling, but in this case the passage *is* worth the trouble. It is not like polishing shot, to take pains with such music, for the *Sanctus* is a perfect gem. The chord of A major (the key note) at the tenth bar, after a brief destruction of the key, has winning sweetness; and the interruption of the cadence by the chord of B flat, at the thirteenth bar, is one of those delightful surprises which are the especial prerogatives of genius.

The Mass, taken as a whole, has great variety of

style, some parts reminding you of the old masters; for instance, the *sequence* at the beginning of the '*Quoniam tu solus*,' and the fugue '*Et vitam*;' whilst other parts, as the '*Sanctus*,' are essentially modern. But it is a noble composition, and worthy of the genius of Beethoven. Moreover, it abounds with that captivating melody which never fails to touch the heart.

Beethoven avowed that he 'hated to write for voices,' because he could 'exact anything he pleased from instruments.' But when he did write for voices, he took care to give them their due. He did not make them a mere peg to hang his band upon.

HAYDN'S 'SEASONS.'

NO one is ignorant that Haydn's '*Seasons*' is divided into four distinct parts, descriptive of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Though the composer was between sixty and seventy years of age when he produced this long work, it has all the originality and freshness of youth. When Rossini was *the rage*, and his admirers, regarding the music of Haydn as that of an old barbarian, were thrown into raptures by '*Zitti, Zitti*,' they little thought that the *motivo* was stolen, note for note, from '*With joy the impatient husband-*

man' in Haydn's 'Spring.' The charming pictures of rural life with which we are presented in the 'Seasons' can hardly fail to delight the population of an agricultural county. There is scarcely a melody which the farmer cannot take home to his fields and whistle over his furrows. Neither let him fear for one moment that, because this is the case, he betrays a vulgar and antiquated taste by feeling or expressing admiration of such music. Quite the reverse. A man only exposes himself, when he evidently takes his pleasures upon trust; when he praises the flavour of his *first* olive, or his *first* glass of claret; or when he affects to melt away at hearing a strain of which he manifestly knows no more than he does of the language to which it is set, since, if he did, he would pronounce it to be worthless.

SPOHR.

WE have always considered Spohr the finest and most original writer that has appeared since Beethoven. Less wild and eccentric than Weber, more solid and inventive than Mendelssohn, he is great in all styles of music. Yet it is much to be doubted whether he will ever become popular in this country, owing to his inveterate predilection for artificial harmony. His melodies are often intensely sweet, as well as clear and simple, taken by themselves; but the harmony gives them a different character. Where

the musician is delighted with an artful beauty, the common hearer is disappointed by an effect which he can neither feel nor understand. The new relationships that are constantly starting up are too subtle and refined for him to trace. All men who are musically constituted by nature derive more or less pleasure from natural harmony; but artificial harmony is chiefly for those who have studied, or at least become familiar, with the resources of art. Since music is intended for all mankind, we cannot help thinking Spohr's excess of refinement a defect in his music. He who habitually feeds upon dainties, and creates a morbid appetite by stimulants, will come at last to loathe wholesome food. But let us be just to the noble qualities of Spohr. He has never wilfully degraded his art, or pandered, like Rossini, to the taste of the vulgar, for a low and transient popularity. We doubt whether Spohr ever wrote a progression which he could not find a canon to justify. But what shall be said in excuse for that passage in Rossini's *terzetto*, 'Ah, vieni,' in which he treats us with a series of *five consecutive fifths* and *three sevenths resolved by ascension*, except that he has so smothered his villanous harmony with *noise* that the ear cannot comprehend the *music*? Composers who never had a tithe of his genius have since been busied in retailing his defects; hence our Mercadantes, Donizettis, Verdis, *et id genus omne*, whose small faculty of writing pretty melodies has only

enabled them to do the more harm. That which this tribe want is *individuality*—the true test of genius. Their music is less the music of the *men* than of the *day*. There is no stamp of one mind upon it.

(Written before a performance of 'The Last Judgment.')

THAT Spohr is somewhat of a mannerist no one would be likely to deny, since this would be tantamount to denying him to be an original writer. But his manner is entirely his own. He borrows from no one ; and few, if any, have borrowed much from him. To do so, indeed, would be next to impossible, for the peculiarity of his style does not consist of quaint turns and singular isolated passages, but of a deep vein of thought which pervades everything that he does. His music is sometimes dark and gloomy, sometimes it melts into exquisite tenderness : but it is always the music of Spohr. His chorus resembles that of no other master. It carries us in imagination back to the ancient Greek plays, where the voices, supposed to be assembled in the open air, swell and fade with the breeze, like the tones of an Æolian harp. In 'The Last Judgment' the solo and chorus 'Holy, holy,' and the quartet and chorus 'Blest are the departed,' are indescribably beautiful. Here, if ever, the composer wrote 'with the winds of Paradise upon his brow.' Here, too, we have a judicious

example of leaving the voices without accompaniment. But in the third bar of the 'Holy, holy,' the word 'Lord' is sung to an unaccented quaver, a fault that might easily be remedied by dividing the first crotchet into a dotted quaver and a semi-quaver for the word 'Holy;' the next word, 'Lord,' would then be sung to two quavers, and thus, as the time is slow, become sufficiently important.

HANDEL AND SPOHR.

(*The 'Dettingen Te Deum' and 'The Last Judgment.'*)

NOTHING could be finer than the contrast afforded by this morning's programme. Handel and Spohr are very antipodes in music. The choruses of the 'Old Teutonic Giant' may be compared to the thundering of billows upon a rocky shore; whereas those of Spohr resemble the moaning of the wind after the storm has spent its fury. But, with the exception of both being great musicians, they have nothing in common between them. This was fortunate for the modern, inasmuch as no one could successfully compete with Handel in his own style. The structure of music, as it was in Handel's day, continued to be a model to composers till Haydn captivated the world by deviating into an untrodden path. The influence of his new style of writing is strongly felt in the productions of Mozart and Beethoven, though they were

no slavish imitators, but had each a decided character of his own. Haydn's leading feature was elegance; Mozart's passion; and Beethoven's, a wild exuberance of fancy. It was reserved for Spohr to depart as far from the style of his predecessors as Haydn had done before him; and Spohr's influence is as much felt in the compositions of Weber and Mendelssohn as Haydn's had been in those of Mozart and Beethoven. Yet Spohr, unlike Haydn, has had few or no direct imitators. His works are so much a part and parcel of himself, that successful imitation would scarcely be possible; and this, delightful as those works are, we cannot help regarding as fortunate for the art.

GLÜCK'S 'ARMIDA.'

THE more we hear of this sort of music, the more dissatisfied do we become with many modern innovations, miscalled improvements. If, as such compositions prove, the passions may be wrought to the highest pitch of excitement by simple means, when those that are complex leave us as cool and as much masters of ourselves as they found us, why should we be ever straining to complicate music? The answer, we fear, is too easy. Wanting the 'ounce of mother,' we seek for a substitute in the 'pound of clergy.' The *art* of composition may be acquired by study, but *invention* is a natural gift. Men of genius must labour

in order to be great ; and they do labour. But where genius is wholly wanting, the labour, at best, is only thrown away.

Had the 'Armida' been introduced as a modern composition, we doubt whether many who heard it for the first time would have suspected its antiquity. Yet they might have in that case denied its originality, because its effects have been imitated by others. It is to be regretted that so fine a work as Glück's could not have been given entire. The stringed accompaniment to the duet between 'Armida' and 'Hidraot' is delicious, and equally so are the vocal melodies. This accompaniment is carried on, at least in character, under the beautiful air which Roland sings in the 'Garden of Enchantment ;' here, too, the flute has an independent melody in the most pathetic parts of its scale. The accompaniment is as continuous as the flow of a river. The very atmosphere seems to be impregnated with music, and it is the absence of the least cessation of the instruments which gives that bewildering effect proper to the influence of magic. The dreamy way in which Mr. Sims Reeves warbled the air, and his delightful tone, showed that he entered most completely into the design of the composer.

MENDELSSOHN.

('Elijah,' and Beethoven's 'Mass.')

THE more we hear of 'Elijah' the more fully do we become convinced that Mendelssohn's genius was essentially dramatic. His musical painting is vivid and romantic, like that of Weber and Spohr. But Beethoven, so far from suffering, by coming immediately after, showed that he had the loftier mind and the profounder feeling. The former constantly delights and surprises, but the latter sometimes strikes with awe. Parts of the Mass are not only gorgeous but majestic.

'ST. PAUL.'

THE book of words to 'St. Paul' would have been a millstone round the neck of any composer; but since this book was voluntarily accepted, it cannot be complained of as an injury. Much of the music itself, however, is essentially heavy, as may easily be made to appear. In the first place, there are more than *thirty* pieces of *recitative*, most of which are not only long but *narrative*, instead of being declamatory. Add to this that the voice is generally fettered and made hazy by a cloud of accompaniment. Many of the choruses, though consisting of responsive movements and admirable counterpoint, are rendered ineffective by

the want of striking and original melody. What is still worse, the *cadences*, like the plums in the sailor's pudding, are 'not within hail of each other.'

Rameau, the founder of the modern system of fundamental bass, laid it down as a rule that a cadence of some sort or other should occur at the end of every two or four bars, and the reason is obvious. Music is a *language*, in which the cadences form the punctuation. Now, a sentence of which the members are too long, and which is also too long in itself, must always be unmeaning and unintelligible. The old melodic cadence from the third to the key note is of frequent occurrence in 'St. Paul,' yet hackneyed as it is, it is hailed with pleasure as a rest for the wearied ear. Of the choral accompaniments it may be said, as of Virgil's Sea, '*nec mora, nec requies.*' Wind instruments are holding on, stringed instruments are executing rapid divisions, and the voices are fighting a battle for supremacy. The composer might have taken a valuable lesson from the motto to Hubbard's little tract upon Bell-ringing, '*In musicâ, si non adsint Harmonia, Simplicitas, et Veritas, compositio omnino consistere nequit.*'

THE 'LOBGESANG.'

THE *Lobgesang* of Mendelssohn is a 'symphonia cantata,' too long for description, as it consists of ten pieces. The introductory symphony has three dis-

tinct movements. The first movement, *maestoso con moto*, in B flat, opens with a phrase of two bars of melody which seems to have been an especial favourite of the composer, since he has not only constructed that movement out of it, but introduced it into the following *allegro*, and treated it in a great variety of ways. The chorus end the cantata with it. This phrase is original and sufficiently decided, but is too short to inspire much interest. It rather excites than gratifies expectation. We have it distributed among the parts in the *animato* movement of the first chorus, and again at the end of the *allegro di molto* of the same. In short, it sticks to the composer as the Old Man of the Sea clung to the neck of Sinbad. The choruses are elaborately written, and by no means without spirts of fire, though rather dry upon the whole; as there are no fewer than seven, we cannot help thinking that they render the cantata somewhat heavy. The soprano solo, with duet and chorus, 'I waited for the Lord,' is sure to please every hearer. The solo is one of those delightful and original melodies which never cloy by repetition, and for which Mendelssohn was famous when he happened to be in the vein. But sacred music was not his forte. We have been accused of singularity, if not something worse, for daring to say this, but others are already beginning to be of the same opinion. M. Victor Schœlcher, for one, has spoken to the point in his *Life of Handel*.

THE PERFORMANCE.

The long instrumental symphony of the *Lobgesang* was played with marvellous beauty and precision, from the first grand heralding by the trombones to the very last note. We learn from a descriptive notice in the Festival books that the preliminary *mæstoso con moto* is supposed to be a *chorale* of Luther's; and though we think the subject of the first two bars has been much too often introduced, yet we must admit that it is always treated in an artistic and masterly manner, and that it imparts a classical unity of style to the entire work. The first *allegro* is said to be 'the longest ever written.' However that may be, we cannot help thinking it much too long. There is no doubt of the composer having written it *con amore*, and of his having lavished much scientific treatment upon it; but science is mere pedantry if it be employed only for its own sake. Prolixity, however, has always been the fault of the German school. We have already stated in a former article that Dr. Burney said of the Germans, more than a century ago, 'their vices' are '*prolixity* and *pedantry*.' Here the *italics* are his. This symphony requires a first-rate band, which it assuredly had upon the present occasion. The rapid divisions for the strings went off like lightning; the wind instruments were always strictly in time and tune, and the minutest niceties of expression were duly attended

to. Mendelssohn was great in the expression of grief, and partial to the minor mode. The key of G *minor* seems hardly appropriate to the tenor solo—*allegro moderato*—‘He counteth all your sorrows in the time of need; he comforts the bereaved with his regard.’ Here the composer seems to have been thinking more of the *words* ‘sorrows,’ and ‘bereaved’ than of the ‘comfort,’ which is the subject upon which his mind should have been fixed. However, the expression of deep anguish is so fine in the chorus, ‘All ye that cried,’ which immediately follows, that we think that chorus one of the finest things in the work. Of the duet and chorus, ‘I waited for the Lord,’ we have before spoken in terms of unqualified praise. The recitative, ‘We called through the darkness,’ is finely dramatic; and the chorus, ‘The night is departing,’ is worked up with much spirit. The *chorale* is an old German psalm tune finely harmonised. It is first sung in chords by voices alone, and then in unison, to a divided accompaniment by the instruments. We don’t admire the pauses in the first verse, because they seem to us to cut up the melody. Neither is it very safe to leave the voices so long by themselves, since they have always a tendency to flatten. The chorus, however, sustained the pitch and produced the intended effect; the voices in unison sounded very grandly through the splendidly-played band accompaniment. The duet, ‘My song shall be always thy mercy,’ begins in

G *minor*, and has a good deal of that doleful key, though it ends in B flat, preparatory to the final chorus, 'Ye nations offer to the Lord,' which is a great favourite with the admirers of Mendelssohn's sacred music. It is due to the great composer to say that his work is entirely free from the taint of secularity. This, however, is but negative praise. It does not follow that a work must be devotional, if it be not secular. It may be simply dull. The *Lobgesang* is not devoid of devotional feeling and dramatic fire, though upon the whole we think it somewhat heavy.

Mendelssohn has been praised for what has been called 'the recurrence of his thematic forms'; but in plain English this fine phrase only means 'repetition,' which was this composer's besetting sin.

'ELIJAH.'

WE have always considered 'Elijah' to be a grand and delightful effort of true genius, though vastly inferior to the sacred inspirations of Handel. Some faults there are which have been copied by other composers. We have formerly stated our reasons for objecting to choral recitative, which was unhappily imitated by Mr. Horsley. But the famous chorus, 'Thanks be to God,' which ends the first part, contains a harmony (if harmony it may be called) to

which our ears will never be reconciled. We allude to the *naked minor second* at the words, 'But the Lord,' &c. It is very difficult to sing. We only wish it had been more difficult, for then it would have been impossible. Handel has employed the same interval with profound judgment in the song, 'He was despised.' Here it is used to express the word 'grief,' and, though softened by consonant intervals, crushes the heart with a momentary pang. But Mendelssohn harps upon the *naked minor second*, in what should be an ebullition of *holy joy*. We do not wish the reader to take our word for what we have said. He may realise the effect for himself by striking two contiguous white notes simultaneously upon the pianoforte.

The first part of the oratorio was interesting throughout; the second part was, and always must be, heavy. This is partly due to the want of finer subjects in the songs. Every candid auditor would confess a preference to 'Oh, rest in the Lord,' on account of its superior melody; for though harmony may be called the *body* of music, melody is its *soul*. The singers, however, are as much in fault as the composer. The error of the latter was, that he wrote the airs too much in the unconnected style of recitative. The mistake of the former is, that they sing the recitative too much in the fashion of airs, instead of simply speaking it in

tune. If singers could only be persuaded to think less of vocalization in these recitatives, 'Elijah' would lose half its heaviness. Even Mr. Montem Smith, who is remarkable for his judgment, pulled a long face, and forgot to be natural. He was no longer the same man who sang 'The Flaxen-headed Ploughboy.' Ah, but this was an oratorio! As if an oratorio could change human nature. English recitative seems to be buried in the grave of Braham.

RECITATIVE.

To carry the subject into 'Elijah,' let us glance at Obadiah's recitative, 'Man of God,' &c., by Mr. —. This gentleman is gifted with a natural organ equal to any musical requirement. He might have made as great a hit in that recitative as Braham could have done in his best days, but threw away the opportunity. Braham would have gone to work thus. Considering notation, for the time, his slave, he would have thrown himself heart and soul into the words. 'Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy sight.' Here he would have been pointed, earnest, and supplicatory—not so much singing as verbally entreating. 'Thus said Jezebel, "ELIJAH *is worthy to DIE*"'—this would have been given with a tremendous and menacing expression.

'So the *mighty* gather against thee, and they have

prepared a *net* for thy steps ; that they may *seize* thee, that they may SLAY thee'—here every emphatic word would have been chiselled and clipped till it stood out in startling relief ; but this—with '*bated breath,*' lest some spy should overhear, or, that being impossible, lest a bird of the air should carry the matter. 'Arise, then, and hasten for thy life'—here he would have forgotten his caution, and been loud, sudden, and rapid. 'To the wilderness journey,'—frightened at the sound of his own voice, he would here have almost whispered his advice. 'The Lord thy God go with thee : He will not fail thee, He will not forsake thee'—here he would have been fearless, solemn, and impressive ; for God, in his thoughts, is a tower of strength. 'Now begone'—he would have given this quickly and peremptorily ; 'and bless me also'—his pathos here would have melted the audience into tears. Now, what of all this did Mr. — do, or even think ? Of what could he be thinking, when he delivered 'Arise, then, and hasten for thy life,' in a style that would have graced a love song ? . . .

We shall not be thought to have given this subject undue prominence, if its importance be rightly considered. We have often felt, and therefore so we presume have others, that recitative is generally the heaviest part of an oratorio ; whereas it ought to be quite the reverse. It is here that composers generally indulge in their boldest modulation, and here also a

singer has scope for his finest expression. Recitative carries on the story, which necessarily halts in choruses, airs, and other vocal pieces, where a repetition of the words occurs. It should arouse the flagging spirits of the audience, instead of sending them to sleep. Some relief from consecution of air is imperative, but it should be derived from a different kind of excitement, and not from the *rest* which inattention bestows.

The recitatives in 'Elijah' are particularly fine. The *libretto* is well written, and this difficult species of composition was peculiarly suited to Mendelssohn's dramatic genius.

CHORAL RECITATIVE.

A CHORUS can only give us the form of recitative without the spirit; neither do we want a hundred voices to tell us what might be told more naturally and forcibly by one. Add to this that what Rousseau says is true—'The intention of recitative is to connect the several parts of the drama, and, by separating the airs, to add to their brilliancy, and *to prevent the ear from being satiated by a continuance of loud music.*'

The true doctrine of recitative was laid down a century ago by Grassineau, in a book which was licensed

and approved by Pepusch, Greene, and Galliard. The same doctrine was taught by Rousseau, and much more recently by Beethoven. We admit that a really fine effect stands securely upon its own authority ; but in this case the effect is not fine. A choral recitative is a mongrel mixture of psalm singing and cathedral intoning, without possessing the value of either. Mendelssohn's example, however, has been much followed, and will probably continue so to be, for this sort of thing is very easy to write, though extremely tiresome to hear.

MADAME GOLDSCHMIDT.

SOME songs in the 'Messiah' have been supposed inferior to others, rather because they have generally fallen to the lot of inferior singers than on account of any intrinsic mediocrity. 'He shall feed His flock,' for instance—notwithstanding the sweetness of the pastoral melody—generally 'drags its slow length along.' But in this case it is the singer, not the song, that sends the audience to sleep. When Madame Goldschmidt took up the air at 'Come unto Him all ye that labour,' there was no drawling, and therefore no drowsiness. The ever-varying beauty of expression and the curt boldness of the cadences infused life and spirit into every repetition of a passage. The same may be said of 'But Thou didst not leave.' It is not indeed a great song, but it has much simple pathos,

and is tame only, as Madame Goldschmidt showed, when tamely sung. She knew how to make it a vehicle for carrying the words to the heart.

Her greatest efforts were doubtless 'Rejoice greatly,' and 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' The mechanical difficulties of the former have been conquered with equal ease by others; but few have equalled Madame Goldschmidt in forcible expression of the sentiment. Every phrase should be a thrill of exultation; and such she made it. The latter song, however, was her noblest achievement. The holding notes afforded scope for the legitimate display of those subtle *crescendoes* and that exquisite quality of tone in which she is perhaps unrivalled. There were also some grand telling points. Take for instance, the triumphant rendering of 'Now is Christ risen from the dead,' where the startling *crescendo* is carried to a double *forte*, and drops at once to a tender *piano* upon the word 'dead.' Or take the sweet pathos of her cadence, where a modulation is made into the subdominant of the original key. But, not to dwell too minutely upon particulars, we may say that the whole song must have been studied with that sort of care which John Kemble is known to have bestowed upon the speeches of Shakspeare. Madame Goldschmidt proved this in her only encore, by not varying one jot or tittle from her first reading. We here allude to 'Come unto me.' The air, 'If God be for us,' gave Madame Goldschmidt a fine opportunity (of which she

did not fail to avail herself) of showing how exquisitely she can treat a long holding note. This song, too, was remarkable for containing the only word that she could not pronounce nearly as well as a native—the word ‘intercession.’ ‘How beautiful are the feet’ was charmingly sung. The contrast between her level style of singing, till the modulation comes on, after the first cadence in B flat, and the increasing energy displayed at every repetition of the words, ‘And bring glad tidings,’ was delightful. The recitatives, ‘There were shepherds,’ &c., were a lesson to English singers. They were firm and decided—an emphatic announcement of facts. If we were disposed to be hypercritical, we might perhaps cavil at a short cadence in ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth;’ but this was no drawback upon our pleasure. There was only one drawback, and that was the conviction, which we could not shake off, that the gifted being who so much delighted us was probably then and there herself a sufferer from indisposition.

The ‘Messiah’ was such new ground to Madame Goldschmidt, that her triumph in that oratorio seemed to introduce us to a new singer. She was another and yet the same. But the evening concert was a return to the ‘Jenny Lind’ of former days—a return which seemed to annihilate the interval which has elapsed since her last visit to this country. We felt

hat the singer was still young, and (delightful illusion!) that we were young too. There was the familiar holding note with its 'sweetness long drawn out'—the silvery shake—the facile execution—the bold declamation—the leaning forward to the audience in the earnestness of appeal—and the abrupt reining back of the head and chest in throwing out the bold, curt cadence; as much as to say, 'Thus far I have solicited your sympathy; now I demand it.' And truly might it have been responded, 'to hear is to obey.' All acknowledged the presence of an inspired priestess in the temple of art. We are not of the number of those who hold Madame Goldschmidt's singing to be absolutely faultless. We think it, upon the whole, less faultless than that of Madame Clara Novello. The faults, however, are results neither of weakness, which could be pitied, nor of ignorance, which would be despised—but of a noble daring, which draws too freely upon the utmost physical power in attempting to give utterance to the mental conception.

Her first song, Mozart's rondo '*Il Re Pastore*,' was perfectly enchanting, and the violin accompaniment by M. Sainton exquisitely handled. We believe the composer was a boy of seventeen when he wrote it. He has now been dead some sixty years, yet the music is still as sweet as a March violet. 'On mighty pens' called forth higher vocal powers. Nothing could be grander than the *crescendo* at the words, 'In swiftest

flight to the blazing sun.' The G minor strain was delicious. We may here add that the imitations of the lark, the dove, and the nightingale, by the clarionet, bassoon, and flute, were worthy of the singer and of the song. The scena and aria, 'Ah mie fedeli,' exhibited to perfection Madame Goldschmidt's marvellous powers of execution. Still, in the concert room we cannot think it a composition worthy of her. The *Recueil de Mazourkas*, de F. Chopin, contained little popular melody, but enabled her to exhibit much fine declamation. 'John Anderson' was treated with much originality and force; but all who remember Miss Stephens will probably be ready to admit that none of her successors have rivalled her in that style of ballad. Madame Goldschmidt's Swedish 'Echo Song' was a wonderful display of versatility of power. Here she accompanied herself upon the pianoforte, but the voice was everything. The shout 'Hoah! Hoah!' was as ringing as though the hall had been empty, and the rapid calls, with the returns of the echo, were admirably true to nature. Miss Stephens, in *Comus*, gave a beautiful imitation of echo; but here we had Echo herself. After the voice had exhibited prodigies of execution without a note of accompaniment, and when it was dying away in the final close, Madame Goldschmidt just touched the instrument. Words could not have said more plainly, 'Do you doubt me? Would you know whether I have fallen an *iota* from the pitch? Take it then.' At this,

the audience instinctively rose and rent the air with acclamations.

Madame Goldschmidt's liberality is not confined to a lavish distribution of money. She left a sick bed that others might not be disappointed of a promised pleasure. She gave them their full tale, with a heartiness and cheerfulness that betokened an utter abnegation of self. We dare not say that we never heard so fine a singer; but we do say that so fine a singer is very rare, and so fine a character is rarer still. Take Madame Goldschmidt for all in all, we shall not look upon her like again.

SIVORI.

SIGNOR SIVORI'S performance of the 'Prayer of Moses' upon the fourth string, may be objected to by the legitimatists as Paganini's was before him. But, taking Sivori for all in all, we have never heard a violinist with the like variety of powers, with the single exception of his master—Paganini. We hold too that Sivori, like Paganini is truly great in expression. He has learned the secret of knowing when enough has been done. He is no wire drawer. We have heard fine players prepare for a pathetic passage, dwell upon it, and then leave the audience delighted with their skill. Sivori knows better how to go to work. He takes you by surprise, knocks you down, and leaves you.

Sivori portrayed the humours of the carnival with a felicity peculiarly his own. He can be grotesque without being vulgar. Even 'Lucy Long' became half a lady under his hands. On being encored he gave some variations which we believe to be Paganini's, upon the air 'Nel Cor Più.' From this may be had, perhaps, the best idea that can now be obtained of the manner of that wonderful performer.

THE OVERTURE TO 'FIGARO.'

CRACK bands rattle through 'Figaro' as fast as they can, the fastest being always considered the best. But this is an error. In the first place, *presto* is not *prestissimo*. In the second place, the *presto* of the present day is not the same thing as the *presto* of seventy years ago. And in the third and last place, the result is, that one of the sweetest bits of melody that ever issued from the brain of a musician, which occurs in the middle of the overture, is thereby utterly destroyed.

BELLINI. 'NORMA.'

IT was a decided improvement upon the former concert to have the music of 'Norma' done to the original Italian words. To the opera itself, we can only give very qualified praise, especially when it is

made the subject of a concert. Bellini had unquestionably the faculty of writing graceful and often enchanting melody. His accompaniments, too, are light and elegant. His best airs follow an audience to their homes. But unhappily all these airs are founded upon one common type, and most of them are more or less deformed with lengthened roulades of a uniform character. Bellini's expression of joy and grief is chiefly confined to the use of the major or minor mode. For the rest, whether the singer be dying in resignation, or raving with despair, he announces his (or her) case in a flourishing division. We are by turns both disgusted with the impropriety and wearied with the monotony of this manner of composition. In a word, an opera of Bellini is a dessert without a dinner. After such a feast, the selection from 'Il Trovatore' was refreshing, and infused some spirit into the conclusion of the concert.

OURY.

M. OURY recalls to us Sterne's pithy remark, that 'there is who makes what he fiddles to be felt.' Possessing unlimited control over the varied resources of his fine but difficult instrument, he renders them always subservient to the higher graces of expression. His ordinary tone is full, round, and firm, and withal

so sweet as to be scarcely distinguishable in quality from that of his harmonics. He executes the most rapid and intricate divisions with a due observance of light and shade, and with an ease that masks their extreme difficulty.

SACRED MUSIC.

MOZART'S MASS, No. 7, in B flat, was done here for the first time without alteration or omission. This work is a glorious effusion of art and genius. The lovely passages for the clarionets, which were deliciously played by Mr. Lazarus and Mr. Horace Hill, were as beautiful as the vocal melodies. Well might Samuel Warren, in his 'Diary of a late Physician,' call this 'heart-rending music.' We doubt, however, whether the feelings which it excites in an Englishman familiar with Handel be 'sacred.' The sense of pleasure with which we listen is intense; but it is a pleasure entirely divested of that awe which addresses to the Supreme Being should inspire. The same remark applies, perhaps in an inferior degree, to Spohr's 'Christian's Prayer.' Here, indeed, we have gloom, but it is not awful gloom. It is rather that pensive melancholy which we associate with the twilight of summer, when all around is warmth and fragrance; and when our pleasurable feelings are equally far from being cheerful or religious. It would be a great

mistake, however, to infer hence, that the composers were not duly impressed with the solemnity of their subject. The truth rather is, that Englishmen and foreigners have been educated in different schools, and express the same feelings in a different manner. So Beethoven's 'Gloria' is gorgeous and grand, without possessing any of that sublimity which, as Mr. Pierson truly says, is 'so palpable in the conceptions of Milton and Handel.' The reason is obvious: one inseparable element of the true sublime is *simplicity*; and all the works which we have been considering are more or less elaborate and complicated. The leading subjects are simple, but they are clothed with a meretricious dress.

RULES.

THE 'Sonata' for violin and pianoforte is a welcome return to the old thematic form of composition. We have long thought that the preference shown by modern writers for the 'Fantasia,' the 'Solo,' the 'Capriccio,' *et id genus omne*, was rather due to want of sustaining power, than to innate conviction that freedom from restraint was any token of superiority in art. The greatest geniuses have gloried in showing independence of thought and inspiration of fancy while submitting to the rigour of the strictest rules. Hence some of Purcell's finest songs have been written over two bars of ground bass. This was in the days

of musical pedantry. Here, as in everything else, the golden mean lies between two extremes. All rules are bad which serve only to fetter, and all are good which only restrain from licentiousness.

JOACHIM.

HE is truly a violinist *sui generis*. His very manner of holding his instrument is somewhat peculiar. Spohr held his fiddle in a horizontal position. Many players drop the left hand a little, so as to get a slight downward slope ; but Joachim elevates the left hand enough to make the fiddle slope considerably in an opposite direction. His tone did not strike us as being remarkable for its power, but it was exquisite in its quality. He never seeks to astonish, but the wonderful truth and beauty of his expression and the masterly ease with which difficulties are overcome are really more astonishing than any mere tricks of execution. The subtle charm of his playing consists in the developing of innate beauties, which ordinary players would fail to discover in an author. He is thoroughly *in earnest* in everything he does.

MADRIGALS.

OF all vocal compositions, this kind is perhaps the most difficult to write, and certainly not the most easy to sing. The old madrigal composers were grave and earnest men, whose music was no child's play, or its merits would not be recognised after a lapse of three centuries. Their means were limited. Their rules were rigorous. Variety had therefore to be obtained by ingenious and learned contrivances. A deep knowledge of counter-point was considered the main feature of a musical education, and this led naturally to the mysteries of fugue and canon. We moderns are apt to think that the ancients must have been terribly fettered; but it was not so. Morley, in alluding to the leading point of '*Non nobis Domine*,' which was then often taken as a theme for descanting, has this observation—'If a man would study, he might find upon it variety enough to fill up many sheets of paper; yea, though it were given to all the musicians in the world, they might compose upon it, and not one of their compositions be like unto that of another. And you shall find no point so well handled by any man, either composer or organist, but with study, either he himself or some other, might make it much better.' Hear this, ye prolific concocters of 'variations' and 'polkas!'

ROSSINI.

THIS celebrated composer died lately at Paris in the 77th year of his age. In his youth he wrote with fabulous rapidity, but, though he took a deep interest in his art to the last, he retired from the field of active labour in the middle of his life. He was a man of rare genius, or he would not have had the power to corrupt the music of his country. Since his operas were in the zenith of their popularity, Italy has produced only a tribe of imitators, Verdi being the last. The overtures of Rossini were for the most part sparkling, but flimsy ; yet the overture to 'William Tell' can never be heard without pleasure. He was unrivalled in comic music, but this is the lowest style of composition. His chief strength lay in melody and invention ; yet Spohr contends that many of his supposed novelties had been previously familiar to the Germans. Rossini had the 'ounce of mother,' but he wanted a little more of the 'pound of clergy.' In a word, he wanted earnestness and a greater reverence for the higher beauties of his art. Yet let us be just to the author of '*Di Tanti Palpiti*,' and '*Cujus Animam*,' and confess that he has left behind him melodies that will endure for ever.

We think '*Cujus Animam*,' perhaps, the finest of Rossini's songs ; the melody is exquisite—the cadences enchanting. Yet it is unquestionably opera music,

though forming part of a *Stabat Mater*. He who doubts the incongruity of the music and words, has only to remember Handel's treatment of an analogous sentiment in 'He was despised and rejected.'

GRISI.

Dec. 11, 1869.

THE queen of lyric song has passed away from us, but not before her work was done. For a quarter of a century she was almost without a rival as a dramatic singer, but at last it became a case of 'superfluous lags the veteran on the stage.' Now that she is gone, however, the lovers of the opera remember her only as when she was in her glory, and few of them will live to see her like again. But Providence is more bountiful to us in singers than in composers, and the reason seems to be because human life is short, and still more brief is the period that can be devoted to singing; whereas the works of a great composer are undying. A Grisi may be the darling of her day; a Mozart is a delight for ever.

HARMONISED SONGS, &c.

From a Notice of 'National Songs, chiefly Scottish; harmonised for four voices,' &c.

THE modern custom of writing the tenor and counter tenor parts in the treble clef is radically

faulty. If a singer refuses the trouble of learning the clef proper to his voice, let him go a step further and give up the trouble of attempting to sing. Neither are all melodies improved by being harmonised, but some are positively injured, apart from the violence often done to the sentiment. It is absurd to hear four people thus lamenting——

What made *my* heart so sore?
Oh, it was parting with Robin Adair.'

It is true that this part of our censure equally applies to some first rate glees, such as 'From Celia's Arbour;' but it is also true that it is not undeserved.

IMITATION. 'ISRAEL RESTORED.'

Oct. 25, 1851.

IMITATIVE music is, or ought to be, *suggestive*, in the sense in which that word has of late been applied to painting—that is, more should be intimated to the mind than the ear actually hears. In this kind of music, descriptive colouring is more or less confined to the accompaniments, and even there the slightest exaggeration offends. Neither Handel nor Haydn escaped the charge of having stepped from the 'sublime' to the 'ridiculous.' Sometimes the imitation is so far-fetched that it avoids being ludicrous only by being unintelligible and therefore unsuspected; but

when true, and sufficiently apparent without being strained, it is always heard with delight. Now the recitative accompanied 'Many oxen are come about me,' with which the second part begins, was a dangerous edged tool in the hands of a young composer; and in no part of the oratorio has Dr. Bexfield displayed a more excellent judgment than in this. The lowing of the oxen is indeed heard; even the *gaping* of the bulls is imitated by short *crescendos*; but the strokes are so few and so delicately touched, as not to disgust the most fastidious taste. The long drawling notes to the pause on the chord of B flat, descriptive of 'my strength is dried up,' the crashing discords which paint the horror excited by the 'blasphemy' of the multitude, and the stream of harmony to the enharmonic change, where 'they conspire together,' are admirable. This is followed by a fine song in E major, 'Hear O Lord.'

. . . We must give a passing notice to the chorus 'The waves of the sea,' because here Dr. Bexfield has shown that he has a right notion of the true sublime. The chorus is in C *minor*. The tumult of the waves, and the horrors of the scene, are depicted with uncommon force. The effect of a full chorus singing *pianissimo* the word 'mighty,' and the grating of the discords to the word 'horribly,' might even be considered sublime by some, and so to a certain extent they are; but our composer had to

set 'The Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier;' and he has contrived to rise with his subject, by resorting to *simplicity*. Tumult *distracts* the mind—the truly sublime *absorbs* it in the contemplation of a single idea. The plain subject in C *major* comes upon us, therefore, like a sunbeam on the dark and troubled waters, and is indeed sublime.

PIERSON.

'SOUND, IMMORTAL HARP.'

IF Pierson had written nothing else, he would have deserved the name of a genuine composer. We have assuredly in this chorus that 'genius' which, Lavater says, 'is the intuition of truth.'

. . . All music is a compound of melody, harmony, and modulation. Wherever these three meet in due proportion, *there is music*. Now, melody is but the *expression* of harmony, and modulation is but the *wanderings* into which melody is betrayed by passion. That which determines melody is *accent*, and it is only the diversity of *accent* in different languages that imparts a national character to music. Every great composer has an accent of his own, without which he would not be great. It is this, and this only, that characterises and individualises

him. And it is the fine accent of Mr. Pierson's music that warranted us in boldly claiming for him the attribute of genius. We do not ask the reader to take this doctrine upon our assertion, but upon the authority, or rather upon the reasoning, of Rousseau, perhaps the profoundest musical critic that ever lived.

Accent is the thing 'unteachable, untaught'—that kindles enthusiasm or embitters malignity in those who admire genius, or envy its achievements. It is part and parcel of the essence of a man. It is that which makes the difference between a Bononcini and a Handel ; a Süssmayr and a Mozart.

'JERUSALEM.'

Dec. 19, 1868.

WE have it on the best authority that Mr. Pierson has just completed an elaborate revision of this oratorio, preparatory to the publishing of a new edition. The work, which in its original form was somewhat too long for public performance, will now consist of thirty-six numbers instead of forty-nine. We have always regarded the 'Jerusalem' as a rare emanation of genius, and are quite sure that, *if it ever have fair play*, it will become a lasting favourite with the public.

LETTERS
ON
'THE DECLINE OF MUSIC.'

*from the 'Musical Standard' of January 2nd, 9th, 23rd, February 13th,
27th, and March 6th, 1869.*

IT was the Author's original intention that the following series of letters should begin with one treating of the decline of music in our cathedrals, and pointing out the evil effects produced on secular music by the debasement of the cathedral choirs. Although this letter was actually written, circumstances occurred which prevented its publication, and it is mentioned here merely that the Author's plan may be seen, and that the subject may, to that extent, be completed. The substance of the letter is contained in the leading article of the 'Musical Standard' of Nov. 14, 1868, and the subject finds a place in this volume in the second 'Colloquy.'

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'MUSICAL STANDARD.'

I.

SIR,—In former times the music of the cathedral differed essentially from that of the parochial service. Our forefathers wisely took into account the difference in the size of the buildings and the difference in the culture of the singers. They confined the chant and the elaborate anthem to the cathedral, because the former kind of composition can be heard properly only in vast edifices, and because the latter kind requires numerous and well-trained choirs. The music of a large parish church in which there was an organ was of the following description. There were usually three voluntaries—one to play the people into church, another to play them out ; and an intermediate, or, as it was called, a 'soft voluntary,' which served the double end of resting the clergyman and exciting a devotional spirit in the congregation. The singing was devoted to English Protestant psalm-tunes, with, perhaps an ornate hymn to conclude with. All efforts at improvement should have been directed to the raising of the cathedral and the parochial music to the highest pitch of perfection which their respective standards permit, but with a rigid adherence to the standard of each. Thus in the parish church,

where the choir is maintained by voluntary contributions, much improvement might have been effected by more liberal donations. The number of singers in a choir might have been increased ; the balance of the parts might have been improved, the voices might have been better cultivated, and some attention might have been paid to the higher beauties of expression. An easy anthem, such as 'In Jewry is God known,' might have been occasionally substituted for the ornate hymn ; in which case all would have been done that ought to have been attempted, always supposing the music selected for performance to be the best of its kind.

Instead of trying to improve the music of our parish churches, we have altered its character, by endeavouring to assimilate it more or less to the cathedral service ; with what results I proceed to show.

For this purpose I shall fetch my examples from the 'Church Psalter and Hymn Book' of the Rev. William Mercer, because that work is most widely known, and because it has been most extensively used. It was dedicated, by express permission, to his late Royal Highness the Prince Consort, to two archbishops, and to sixteen bishops. All the 'harmonies,' too, are stated to have been 'revised' by Mr. Goss, the organist of St. Paul's Cathedral. Thus the work bears the stamp of very high authority.*

* The edition quoted is dated 1860.

With Mr. Goss's share of the compilation I have no fault to find. I will only say, that if the music were good it needed no revision, and if bad deserved none.

In his preface Mr. Mercer enforces 'the duty of Congregational Psalmody,' a 'duty' which, he says, the Church of England not only 'recognises,' but 'requires' of her members. I am of opinion that those members of a congregation who are able to assist without injuring the effect of a choir, are not only privileged but bound to do so. These, however, must always be a small minority. In every large congregation there will be many of both sexes too old and many too young to sing. There will be some who have no voices, and others who have no ears ; some who have no liking for music, and some who have no skill in it. There will also be those who are physically incapable of exercising a due control over their vocal organs. To say, therefore, that the Church requires singing of her congregations as a duty, is to liken her to an Egyptian task-master, demanding brick where straw has not been given.

I have heard what is called 'congregational singing' in very many parts of this country, and have generally been more or less offended by it. The effect was that of a crushing of the four-part choir under the weight of the upper melody, sung in bad unisons and octaves by the people.

Here, for the present, like Scheherazade, I must break off, lest I trespass too much upon your space.

II.

Sir,—I have already said that chants are suited only to large buildings, and, let me add, to highly cultivated choirs. The reason is obvious. The chant is a very short composition, and it has to be repeated ten, twenty, thirty, perhaps forty or more times. A bad performance, therefore, must needs render this repetition irksome to the last degree. So far as my experience goes, chanting in parish churches is purely mechanical. When boys sing the treble part they generally flatten after a few verses. As the pitch of the organ is fixed, all that the organist can do is to try to smother the voices, in order to conceal the false intonation of his choir.

With Mr. Mercer's chants I have no fault to find. They are, as he himself tells us, 'the best of those in ordinary use in our cathedrals;' but when he asserts that 'the system of punctuation adopted is that commonly used in our cathedrals,' I join issue with him—I say 'Heaven forbid!' and I require proof of the truth of the assertion.

The laws of the chant, as laid down by Dr. Beckwith in the preface to his own collection, upon the authority of Dr. William Hayes, are these:—'The perfect chant has four tones contained in three alla-breve bars to the *mediato*, or breathing-place, or double bar. The first of these tones is the reciting

note, which serves all verses, long or short, to the third word or syllable before the middle of such verse. It has six more tones in four bars from the *mediato* to the end ; the first of these is also the reciting note, which, like the other, is kept till the fifth word or syllable from the conclusion. The melody and harmony should be solemn and impressive; not trite, but elevating. The ear must not be surprised by harsh discords ; discords are not forbidden except on either of the reciting notes.'

Dr. Beckwith says 'word or syllable,' because an entire word is used whenever it happens to be a *monosyllable*. The rule was vulgarly called 'the rule of three and five;' because the first strain of the chant had three and the second strain five syllables after the reciting note.

Now, I do not say that this rule is wholly incapable of modification, for when either half of the verse ends with a dissyllable whereof the first part is accented, as in 'Glory,' 'Father,' and the like, it is clearly better to give the whole word to the last note than to falsify the accent. But I do say that the rule observed in all its rigour produces fewer absurdities than the new punctuation has entailed upon us.

I cannot trespass upon your space further than to give a few instances of Mr. Mercer's improvements.

For instance, in the *Jubilate Deo* we have 'Sheep of his pasture,' instead of 'Sheep of his pasture.' The first two words being sung to one note, have the effect of being one word ; but there is no such word as

sheepof in the English language. Again, in the *Magnificat* we have 'magni—fiedme,' instead of 'magnified me.' There is no such word as '*fiedme*,' to say nothing of the false accent. Examples of this kind, in which the old rule is violated without need or warrant, might be almost endlessly multiplied.

I have next to object to the improper use of the slur. When one of the semibreves has an *appoggiatura* prefixed to it, or when a minim is divided into two crotchets (or a dotted crotchet and a quaver), the slur is rightly used, because in these cases the two notes represent one of the tones, and a tone is equivalent to a syllable. But Mr. Mercer does not scruple to slur two minims; that is, to give a monosyllable to such minims, and thus to violate the true character of the chant. For instance, in the forty-fifth Psalm he has, 'My heart,' &c., a 'go—od matter,' when it ought to be 'my heart,' &c., 'a good' matter. Here, as before it would be easy to multiply examples; but one by way of illustration will suffice.

Let me not be misunderstood. It is not an occasional deviation from rule of which I complain, for there is no such thing as a rule without exceptions. What I condemn is an ignorance or a reckless defiance of fixed principles. The English Protestant chant has a character of its own, and that character should always be respected.

Neither will it do to tell me that Mr. Mercer is justified by his reverence for truth of accent, since his book abounds with false accents. Nothing can be

worse than the false verbal accents in the first strain of the *Sanctus* by Orlando Gibbons, or the first strain of the *Sanctus* by Dr. Arnold. The first strain of the *Sanctus* by J. Davy is right, and a comparison of these three strains will show the wonderful difference that there is between what is right and what is wrong.

I now come to the psalm and hymn tunes. Here I am afraid it will be found that what is good is not new, and what is new is not good. Why go to Germany for humdrum chorales? Have we not enough that is humdrum at home? A really fine German chorale would cut a sorry figure in an English parish church. Mr. Mercer tacitly confesses as much when he tells us that the music of 'Sebastian Bach' had to be 'simplified.' The late Professor Taylor and Mr. Turle tried their hands at 'simplifying' Bach. They spoiled one of the finest chorales that ever was written, by translating it out of the Phrygian mode into the modern key of E flat major, and by substituting their own common-places for its noble harmonies. After all it made but a poor psalm tune. In fairness to Mr. Mercer I must say that the tunes in his collection, with which I was previously unacquainted, are rather vapid than secular. There is one, however, called 'Montgomery,' Hymn 57, which if it be spurred into a gentle trot at once betrays its innate vulgarity.

Some of the tunes have a pause at each double bar after the German fashion. I trust it will be long before this barbarous practice becomes tolerated in England.

We are told in the preface that the compiler has 'most carefully consulted'—*inter alia*—'propriety of phrase and sentiment,' by which I understand him to mean that the music is suited to the words. I confess therefore that I was surprised to find 'Brightest and best of the sons of the morning' started off in minims, and in the sepulchral key of G minor!

In psalms and hymns, where one and the same melody has to do duty for many stanzas, false verbal accents are often unavoidable. But there is no excuse for beginning with a false accent. Yet this is done more than once or twice in Mr. Mercer's collection. Thus in hymn 21, the first syllable of 'Jésus' has a start note; in hymn 24, the first syllable of 'Sáviour' has the same; in hymn 238 we have 'Oh, fór a heart,' etc., instead of '*Oh*' for a heart,' etc.; in hymn 243, 'Jésus' has again a start note; in hymn 368 we have 'Lord *óf* the harvest,' instead of '*Lord*' of the harvest; in 372 the first syllable of the word 'Fóuntain' has a start note. All these faults could and should have been avoided.

The moral to which I point, is this—that the high patronage and wide popularity of a work so defective justify me in affirming that the present state of the musical part of the service in parish churches is one proof of the 'decline of music in this country.'

Before leaving the subject of sacred music, I may touch upon oratorios and the triennial festivals.

III.

SIR,—It would be a strange thing if music had degenerated in the cathedral, in the parish church, and in the dissenting chapel, and yet preserved its purity in the triennial musical festivals. Of course special causes operate in special cases ; but when disease is in the stem, all the branches of the tree will be more or less affected. Originally the organist, or the London conductor, acting in harmony with some accomplished local amateur, was responsible for the musical details of a festival ; such as the making of the bills, the engaging of the principal singers and the band, the training of the chorus, and so on. There was, indeed, a committee, for without a committee nothing can be done in this country. But in the days of which I speak committees were satisfied with having the management of general affairs, and with keeping a jealous eye over the expenditure. In process of time, however, they began to exercise musical functions. They shared the conductor's duties, and with them shared his responsibilities. Now, a divided responsibility is worth little, because it shifts itself from shoulder to shoulder till scarcely any weight is felt. In such a case adverse criticism, however powerful, and however just, can do little good, because it cuts at a shadow. The conductor does not feel it, because he merely 'complies with the wishes of the

committee.' The committee do not feel it, because they have had 'the consent of the conductor.' The cap may fit both, but neither will wear it. Amateurs of fine taste and competent knowledge are so rare, that they will always be in the minority on a mixed committee. Let such a one (if such there be) object to any work as trivial and unworthy of a musical festival, the answer is ready: 'Ah, but that music is now very popular. People like it, and they will go to hear it. We must first think of *the charity*.'

In the fine arts it unfortunately happens that every man thinks himself competent to give an opinion. The reason is that the object of the fine arts is to give pleasure, and every one knows best what pleases himself. True. But there are *degrees* of pleasure; and he who can only enjoy the lowest, ought not to make himself a standard for the rest of the world. Music is a language. But it is a modern mistake to say that it is a language for the expression of *thought*, although thought is required for the production of a musical composition. It is a language for the expression of *feeling*, and that, too, a feeling of *beauty*. If a composer be without this feeling, or without the power of expressing it so as to impart it to others, his compositions will be worthless, whatever amount of learning and ingenuity they may exhibit. Yet, on the other hand, a piece of music is not to be condemned merely because some hearers can find no merit in it. In order that music may produce its full effect two

things are necessary—ability on the part of the composer, and sensibility on the part of the auditor. For the heart that is dead and cold, the sweetest strains will vibrate in vain.

The feeling and learning that are required for the due appreciation of a fine composition may belong to few in a large audience, but nearly all can distinguish between what is good and bad in the *performance*. Hence the cry for fine singers, for fine bands, and for fine execution. All these things are excellent in their way, but unfortunately they are often employed to make what is worthless attractive.

One of the faults of the times is the abuse of modulation. The old masters laid great stress upon what they called ‘the art of keeping the key.’ Now, a key seems to be chosen, only that it may be abandoned as speedily as possible. Nothing shows the poverty of a composer more than restless modulation. The late ‘curate of Nayland’ says, in his ‘Treatise on the Art of Music:’—‘How sparing was the modulation of antiquity! And yet how sweet are many of its productions!’ Natural modulation affords great variety; and this, with occasional exceptions, should obtain in the oratorio. In recitative, however, a composer may riot in abrupt modulation, when the turns of passion require it, and when he knows how to employ it with judgment. The perfection to which wind instruments have been brought in our days has been a not unmixed good. In symphonies, overtures;

and other instrumental pieces, composers may make the most of them. But in vocal compositions they ought not to be allowed to detract from the supremacy of the voice. Acute wind instruments were as well known in Mozart's time as they are now. No man ever knew better how to write for them than Mozart. Yet in his *Requiem* he has discarded them all. Why? Because it is a *Requiem*, and therefore he did not want cheerfulness, but gloom.

Again, in 'Acis and Galatea' the only wind instruments employed by Handel in addition to the strings are acute wind instruments. Why? Because 'Acis and Galatea' is a Pastoral. We have therefore the oboe (the shepherd's reed), the flute (the shepherd's pipe), and the piccolo (to counterfeit the singing of birds). As if to show what a great master can do with simple means, Handel has produced one of the finest effects in this charming Mask, with voices entirely unaccompanied, at the end of the chorus, 'Mourn all ye Muses,' to the words 'No more! no more!'

But we of the present day have not been content with injuring 'Acis and Galatea' with our 'additional accompaniments;' we have spoiled it by giving the part of Acis to a tenor, for the sake (I suppose) of hearing Mr. Sims Reeves sing 'Love in her eyes sits playing.' Now, Acis was not a man, but a boy, and his part was written for a treble voice. Thus in the delightful trio, 'The flocks shall leave the mountains,'

the voices of Acis and Galatea cross each other, to represent the fondling of lovers, and to contrast finely with the savage roughness of the bass. By the employing of a tenor—a sort of half-way house between two extremes—the intended effect is marred altogether.

If conductors and festival committees would allow us to hear the music of former days exactly as it was written, two advantages would be gained ; the morning bills would have greater variety, and they would possess historical interest. We should see where we have improved and where we have corrupted the art. But what do festival committees know or care about music ? Left to themselves they would be content to ring the changes upon the ‘Messiah,’ the ‘Creation,’ and ‘Elijah’ for ever ! Did George the Fourth present them with the scores of Handel’s works with the intent that they should only do the ‘Messiah ?’ Run over the bills of the triennial musical festivals for the last ten years, and what will you find ? Will you discover the names of Porpora, Hasse, Graun, Marcello, Sarti, Jomelli, Pergolesi, Paisiello, or even Cherubini ? Will you find any of the anthems or of the dramatic works of our own illustrious Purcell ? Will you learn anything of Boyce’s ‘Solomon,’ or of his fine anthem, ‘Lord, Thou hast been our refuge ?’ Will you make any acquaintance with Arne’s ‘Abel,’ or his ‘Judith ?’ Will you find any trace of Arnold’s ‘Cure of Saul,’ of his ‘Abimelech,’ his ‘Resurrection,’ or his ‘Prodigal

Son ?' What ! are all these things so profitless that nothing can be culled from them worthy of the present day ? Or are the gentlemen who manage our musical festivals wholly unfitted for their task ? Mendelssohn is the little god of their idolatry ; and Henry Hugh Pierson is banished from his native land because he is cursed with the gift of genius !

Neither does the wealth of the evenings make up for the poverty of the mornings. One may be occasionally regaled with a fine modern symphony ; but the stringed concertos of Corelli, of Scarlatti, of Geminiani, of Avison, and of Handel, alas ! are mute. Not so much as a *Trio* of the 'gentle Corelli,' is ever heard. Neither would it be relished if it were. Those who have learned to love noise have also learned to hate music.

The vocal music is selected in the vain hope of pleasing everybody, and the consequence is that it satisfies nobody. There are hackneyed songs from 'classical' composers, 'Royalty' songs, and songs from the 'last new opera.' There is also a 'cantata,' a 'serenata,' or some other *ata*, long enough for an entire concert. It must be confessed that what is lost in quality is gained in quantity. The unhappy audience, after having suffered for four hours in the morning and four more at night, are expected to rise with the lark to be ready for the next day's performance. They do it because they think it is the right thing to do, flattering themselves that the more they suffer the more

they deserve to gain a reputation for being real lovers of music !

I consider our triennial festivals flagrant proofs of the 'decline of music' in England.

If you bear with me I may next touch upon secular performances.

IV.

Sir,—Let us now take a peep into the concert room, Concerts undertaken by professional musicians for their own pecuniary advantage must not be too closely scrutinised. 'Those who live to please must please to live.' A professor ought not to be expected to sacrifice his bread to quixotic notions of the dignity of his art ; still, concerts of this sort are tests of the public taste. When good music is in fashion, those who cater for the public will find it their interest to give good music ; and when trash is more attractive, they will be compelled to provide trash. The case is different with regard to concerts undertaken by amateurs for the amusement of themselves and their friends. Such persons can afford to gratify their own inclinations : they have no excuse for giving what is low and empty, beyond the simple fact that they like what is low and empty, and if they do, they must bear to be told so.

Fifty years ago I used to attend the weekly concerts of an amateur society of which I afterwards

became a member. The performance commenced at eight o'clock in the evening, and ended at ten. As fifteen minutes' rest was allowed between the first and second part, the music never lasted two hours. No tokens of approbation or dissent were allowed on the part of the audience. There was an organ as well as a band ; the vocal music consisted of songs, duets, glees, and choruses ; the instrumental of symphonies and overtures, as well as of accompaniments to the voices. It was a standing rule that a concerto of Corelli, Geminiani, Scarlatti, or Handel, should make a part of every bill (although such concerto excluded the wind instruments) in order to keep up the character of the concerts ; but the best music of the day was never rejected.

This society lasted for many years, and did much to preserve a taste for good music in the town. After its dissolution other musical associations started up ; but now all things were changed. There were no longer wise rules to maintain a classical character in the performances, to limit their length, and to curb the display of personal vanity. The vocal societies relinquished the glees in favour of part-songs, in which all could join. The instrumental societies discarded the stringed concertos, because the players upon wind instruments did not like to stand idle ; at all the concerts applause was encouraged, and encores were allowed. Instead of giving weekly concerts, each society was obliged to content itself with getting up

two or three in a year. The voices seldom had any other assistance than that of the pianoforte, and the bands lost the difficult art of accompaniment. Such being the state of things, the result was necessarily a 'decline of music.'

Another class of amateurs sprang up, rather too high in the social scale to sing at concerts, unless they were given in the name of charity. I say 'in the name,' because there is not a word in the English language more abused than that of 'charity.' But if a church, or a church-organ, chanced to get out of repair, it was a godsend to these ladies and gentlemen: they could then condescend to sing or play, because it was a case of 'charity.' Tickets might be sold for four times their intrinsic worth, for 'charity' would be the gainer thereby. Of course the professional musicians were excluded; partly because they were only 'professional people,' and partly because they would have expected to be paid for their services, and the money paid to them would be so much taken from the 'charity.' Love of music was not even pretended as an excuse for these concerts.

There was yet another class of amateurs who occasionally got up vocal entertainments. The music consisted of songs and part songs written after the continental fashion, for male voices only. Dr. Beattie says (and I with him) that 'a fine female voice, modulated by sensibility, is the sweetest sound in art or

nature.' I pity those who can enjoy a concert from which female voices are entirely excluded.

In my opinion the substitution of the part-song for the glee has had an injurious effect upon the music of our concert-rooms. When Spohr first came to this country from the land of part-songs, he was quite enchanted with our native glee. He supposed it to be the only species of national music that we have, and he wondered at our insensibility to its beauty. As the glee allows of only one voice to a part, it must surely require finer singing, and be capable of greater expression than can be given to part-songs, in which the voices in all the parts are multiplied. Many of our boasted part-songs are little more than harmonised airs, if indeed they have any air in them. They are not worthy to be compared with such glees as Webbe's 'When winds breathe soft,' or his 'Swiftly from the mountain's brow,' to mention no others.

If I were asked whether I would exclude Pierson's national part-songs, such as 'To Arms' and 'Ye Mariners of England,' from our concert rooms, my answer would be that they are quite exceptional. Though called 'part-songs,' they have the effect of noble choruses, enriched with fine instrumental accompaniments. Besides, I would exclude nothing that reflects the radiance of genius.

What are called 'royalty songs' have had a baneful influence on our public concerts: the pecuniary

agreement implied by the term 'royalty' is not wholly indefensible. A singer and a composer are free to enter into a contract which is certainly not illegal. Each of the contracting parties seeks only individual advantage, nor can either be bound without mutual consent. Neither, therefore, has a right to complain of having made a bad bargain. Though I know not how the system originated, I can conceive that its beginning may have been innocent enough. Perhaps the singers sought by demanding a small commission upon a certain number of copies of the song sold, to rid themselves of harassing importunities; or it may be that they supposed themselves fairly entitled to some share of a profit which they had mainly contributed to create. Thus, when Madame Vestris took it into her head to sing Horn's song of 'Cherry ripe,' then almost unknown, she made it so popular that the publisher (Power) was enabled to sell some thousands of copies; added to which a demand was established for Horn's future songs. Now, had Madame Vestris previously put in a claim for some share of the profits, I see not how such claim could have been ignored on the principle of abstract justice. The real *gravamen* of the charge now brought against singers I take to be, not so much that they demand a 'royalty,' as that they are ready to sing trash for the sake of what they get by it. Singers who will condescend to do this must bear to be told that they are false to themselves and to their art; that they abuse

the public ; and that they justly forfeit the esteem of all sincere lovers of music.

‘Touring parties’ from London, ‘starring’ in the provinces, have done more harm than good. It is true that they have done some good, because it is instructive to an audience to hear fine singing and playing : but they have taught people to think more of the manner than of the matter ; more of the singer than of the thing sung. Their concert bills are framed in the hope of pleasing all tastes, so that they are sure to offend good taste. The names of two or three ‘classical’ composers are paraded in large letters, but the best pieces selected are generally such as have been worn threadbare : they are often taken from some well-known opera, and they suffer a twofold injury ; that of being separated from what ought to precede and follow them ; and that of being accompanied by a pianoforte instead of by a band. It is well if the rest of the programme be not a wretched *Ollà Podrida*, the main end sought being an opportunity for the display of holding notes, swells, shakes, and meaningless *fioriture*.

Audiences, however, are as much to blame as performers. The upper classes in this country deeming it vulgar to show any outward tokens of admiration or displeasure, the ‘clapping’ is done either by men hired for the purpose, or by the least educated people in the room. Singers are not without excuse if they mistake noisy demonstrations which are flattering to

their vanity for the real sense of the company. They forget, however, that the highest applause is to be found in breathless attention, in the silent tear, or in the deep drawn sigh when the song is over.

With your kind permission I may take a glance in my next at the lyrical drama.

v.

Sir,—The opera is a fashionable institution which reflects, while it cannot control, the form of the public taste. A little consideration will satisfy anyone that this must be so. A manager might as well close his doors as introduce music, however excellent, which people would not go to hear. The ‘decline of music’ in the church and in the concert-room would therefore tell with disastrous effect upon the opera-house; Those who like what is low and trivial in a church, will not seek what is noble and great at the theatre.

There are peculiar difficulties in the way of keeping up the character of the opera. To write a fine lyrical drama requires not only competent knowledge, but genius of a very high order. Now, men of genius will always be rare. The appetite of the public for novelty must consequently be fed by composers of inferior pretension. But this is not all. The singers must be consulted and petted, at least to a certain extent, or they might get an opera damned, and contrive to

throw all the fault upon the music. Now, Italian singers do not like 'earnest German music,' on account of the rigour with which it fetters the voice. They must have scope for the display of flexibility, tone, and feats of execution. On the other hand, German instrumentalists, who regard human voices rather as their slaves than their masters, look with ill concealed disdain upon fine Italian singing.

Dr. Burney, after having made his musical tours through Italy and Germany, gave an opinion of the characteristics of the two schools, which was not only true then, but is equally so at the present day, 'The Italians,' says he, 'are apt to be too negligent, and the Germans too elaborate ; in so much that music, if I may hazard the thought, seems play to the Italians, and work to the Germans. The Italians are perhaps the only people on the globe who can trifle with grace, as the Germans have alone the power to render even labour pleasing.'

If the excellencies peculiar to each of these schools can be united, the result will be that we shall have fine operas. Now, when a German composer is gifted with genius and an Italian is endowed with learning, this will be brought about. Hence we see why the operas of Mozart, which overflow with the sweetest melody, and those of Cherubini, which are enriched with appropriate harmony, are among the finest compositions for the stage : whereas in Verdi's operas, in my humble opinion, we have a soul without a body,

and in those of Meyerbeer, a body without a soul. The fact is, that Mozart was a German and an Italian rolled into one; and the same may be said of Cherubini, if not to the same extent. Beethoven imputed it as a fault to 'Don Juan' that it 'has the complete Italian cut;' but the public continue to think it one of the finest operas in the world, perhaps for that very reason, and in this I quite agree with the public.

Handel's operas have been abused more than I think they deserve. Indeed, I see no reason why they should be abused at all, seeing that they are not likely to be ever performed. His 'Otho' is, in my judgment, a constellation of beauties from beginning to end; and the same may be said of the third act of his 'Richard the First.' There is in this act a short song, 'Morte, vieni,' which to my feelings is worth more than Winter's 'O Giove onnipotente!' and Beethoven's 'In questa tomba,' both weighed together. Titiens could electrify an audience with it, if they were educated up to the mark. But Handel's operas are not easily obtained, because Walsh, the publisher, after Handel's death, melted down the plates of the voice parts, in order to make other use of the metal.

The newspaper notices of a new opera harmonise admirably with the interests of the music sellers. Let there be two or three *ad captandum* songs, and the 'critics' will not be sparing of their praise, or slow to prophesy that 'these delightful airs' will soon become

'the charm of the domestic circle.' These sly hints are quoted by the music sellers ; the 'delightful airs' are bought by the simple-minded public, and the newspapers reap a golden harvest in the shape of advertisements. You will find no notice taken of the 'Recitative,' a most important feature in an opera. It is not then to be wondered at that managers dare not bring out an opera of Gluck, although he is the greatest of dramatic composers. His 'Alceste,' indeed, is said to have kept audiences in a thrill of suspense from the rising of the curtain till its fall. But unfortunately his airs were written with a view to character and situation : they resemble certain flowers, which are beautiful where they grow, but which will not bear transplanting. In a word, they could not be crammed down the throats of the 'domestic circle.' How then should they 'pay'?

Great improvements have been made within the last half century in the band and in the scenery of the opera in England. But what we have gained in brass we have lost in gold. The voices are no longer supreme. They have often to sustain an unequal contest with the instruments and sometimes they are extinguished altogether. One is then reminded of the Frenchman who had plenty of ruffles, but never a shirt.

I maintain that the last seventy years have witnessed a terrible decline in the taste of subscribers to the opera. I don't ask you to take my word for this or

for anything. I will give you a simple and an infallible test. Such a test is a 'benefit night.' I look upon a benefit night as a sort of carnival, when the beneficiary will do anything and everything that is likely to please the audience in order to secure the greatest possible amount of public favour. Now, Mrs. Billington, one of the finest singers this or any other country ever produced, invited the celebrated composer Winter to write his 'Calypso' expressly for her. He afterwards wrote three other operas for the King's Theatre: 'Il Trionfo dell' Amore Fraterno,' for Mrs. Billington, who brought it out for her benefit on March 22, 1804; 'Zaira,' for Grassini, who gave it for her benefit on May 3, in the same year; and 'Il Ratto di Proserpina,' which was brought out for the benefit of Grassini on January 29, 1805. On March 28, in the same year, Mrs. Billington took for her benefit 'La Clemenza di Scipione' of John Christian Bach; and in 1806, at her benefit, she gave the amateurs of London the first opportunity of hearing a complete opera of Mozart, by selecting his 'Clemenza di Tito,' the libretto of which, as is well known, is abridged from the beautiful drama of Metastasio. I might go on to show how Camporese, Naldi, Braham, and others for a long time followed these excellent examples, but enough has been said. Let us look at the reverse of the medal. In these days a prima donna will not scruple to give us for her benefit three acts selected from as many different operas, and those

far from the best. She is thinking of herself more than of her art, well knowing that the public are attracted to the opera rather by the singing than by the music. I forget how many characters Piccolomini appeared in on one of her benefit nights, or how many fragments of operas she introduced, but her transformations were almost as numerous, and quite as incongruous as those of Indur.

It may be said that anything should be allowed upon a benefit night ; but we need not a benefit as an excuse for corrupting the art of music. Most people remember how Signor Arditi dared to tamper with the score of Mozart's 'Il Don Giovanni.' How the part of the hero, which was written for a bass, was altered to suit a tenor, either that Signor Mario might figure in it, or because there was no competent bass in the company. In better times Europe would have been ransacked for a bass, rather than that this thing should have been done ; or some other opera of Mozart would have been substituted for the one in question till a suitable bass could be obtained. Of course we don't expect to get another Ambrogetti.

Perhaps you will kindly allow me space for one more letter to touch upon English opera, in completion of the subject.

VI.

Sir,—I now approach the last and most painful part of this branch of my subject. I allude to the decline, and might almost say the extinction, of the English opera. Yes, sir, the English opera ; for our countrymen have produced operas which were the rational delight of our ancestors, and which will always be regarded with affection by English lovers of music. There are no vocal strains which touch the inmost heart of a man like those of his native land. To give all the reasons for this would be to run into a disquisition too long for a weekly journal. I can only try to throw a gleam of light upon the matter in as few words as possible.

We are to remember that singing differs from common speaking only in being more highly coloured and more impassioned ; that though it is bad to sing in talking, it is good to speak in singing ; and that recitative, which is a sort of connecting link between song and speech, is nothing more than declaiming in tune,

Now, different nations have not only different languages, but also different tones in their manner of speaking. By 'tone' is meant the sound of the voice throughout the whole course of a sentence. The differences of tone I take to be partly due to differences in the collocation of words in a sentence in different languages. This difference of collocation or arrangement will involve a difference in the position of the

accents, and so give rise to what is called tone. For instance, it is not uncommon to hear it said of a Frenchman, or an Italian, 'he speaks English well, but with a slightly foreign accent.' That is, with a difference of tone. It is remarkable that differences of tone pervade different parts of one and the same country. Thus in England you may tell what county an uneducated person was born in, as soon as he opens his mouth; and it is one of the highest compliments that you can pay to an educated man to say of him, 'I know not what part of the country he comes from.'

In what has been said we have a key to the preference which most nations show for the music of their respective countries. I have already given some superficial reasons for the dislike which Italians have to singing the music of Mozart. But there is another and a deeper reason. Mozart was a German: he might set Italian words, and he might write in the Italian style; but there would inevitably be some inflexions of tone in his recitatives and airs which an Italian composer would not use, and which Italian singers would not like, because to the Italian mind they would not be the voice of nature.

All foreigners marvel at the reverence of the English for Purcell. They do not like his music. I should wonder if they did. It would be mere affectation in them to pretend to like what it is impossible

for them to understand. You might wed the music of Purcell's 'From rosie bowers' to German, French, or Italian words, but you could not do this without utterly ruining that inimitable song.

I may be asked how then is it that we English are intensely pleased with the operas of Mozart, and with the 'Fidelio' of Beethoven? I will answer this question with another. How is it that we are intensely pleased with the 'symphonies' of these composers? The truth is, that the pleasure which the operas give us is of the kind afforded by instrumental rather than by vocal music, with the additional charm of that sweetest of instruments, the human voice. Who that is ignorant of Italian could hear the 'Madamina' in Mozart's 'Don Giovanni' without delight? Who would not have that delight lessened by being told the meaning of the words?

H. H. Pierson, the greatest of living composers, has spent the best years of his life in Germany, and in writing for the Germans. They admire the beauty of his music, but they complain that it is 'intensely English.' I make no doubt that his opera of 'Leila,' originally set to German words, has more or less the effect of a translation, and that it would be more at home in an English dress. I have heard one song from that opera to the words 'Thy heart, O man, is like the sea,' and my feeling was that it could have been written only by an Englishman. Such a singer

as Santley could render it a household word among us.

Again, Handel, notwithstanding his long residence in this country, could never be sure of setting English words as a native would set them. 'He was despised,' in the 'Messiah,' is accentuated just as most foreigners would accent the phrase in speaking. In 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' a force is given to the possessive pronoun by the minim, and by the interrupted cadence on the accented part of the bar, which grates terribly upon English ears. Of course it would be easy to multiply examples, but what has been said ought to be enough.

Addison, in No 29 of the 'Spectator,' has some admirable remarks upon the subject in hand. He justly prefers the Italian method of connecting the airs of an opera with recitative, to that of speaking the words, as is done in Purcell's operas. I mention this for the sake of observing that Purcell was not here in fault. In the 'Conjuror's Song,' in his 'Indian Queen,' he has written the finest piece of English recitative extant, to the words 'Ye twice ten hundred Deities.' But it would have been useless for him to write what his countrymen did not know how to perform. Mozart wrote recitatives in the Italian settings of his operas, but in the German settings he omitted them altogether, because the Germans could not execute them properly. It was reserved for Dr. Arne

to prove that recitative is not uncongenial to the English opera ; and John Braham has shown to many now living (myself among the number), that English recitative is capable of the finest declamation.

Let me now compare the past and the present, as I did in the case of the Italian opera.

Dr. Arne's 'Artaxerxes' was the glory of the English stage. It was a daring thing to substitute recitative for dialogue in an English opera, but not more bold than successful. Arne, however, was a man of genius and learning ; and he had not miscalculated his powers. The poetry was translated by himself from Metastasio's 'Artaserse.'

It may be said that 'Artaxerxes' was all very well when it was written, but that 'it would never do now.' Why ? 'Oh, because it is old, and so thin, and so much improvement has been since made in instruments and instrumental accompaniments.' Nay, but hear me ! Mrs. Billington was the greatest soprano that this country ever produced ; she was not only prima donna at the King's theatre ; she was the darling of Europe. Yet that mighty singer was so far from being above appearing in English opera, that she gathered her greenest laurels in this field. 'Artaxerxes' was nearly half a century old when she first acted and sung in it. She was familiar with the operas of Winter and Mozart, and consequently no stranger to wealth of accompaniment. Indeed, we have receded rather than advanced in the art of writ-

ing accompaniments ; why then should not 'Artaxerxes' do now ? Simply because the taste of the public has degenerated. For seventy years the 'Mandane' of this opera was the crucial test of our public singers, and the music was a perennial favourite ; why then should it not 'do' now ? To say that it would not 'do now' is to utter a bitter censure upon the taste of the present day ; and the greater the truth, the severer the censure.

'Artaxerxes' called forth all the powers of Mrs. Billington. I can scarcely imagine a greater treat than must have been enjoyed by those who heard her and Mrs. Mountain in the exquisite duets of 'Fair Aurora' and 'For thee I live.' But Mrs. Billington reserved her power for the song 'Adieu, thou gentle youth,' because she never allowed herself to sing down the voice of another. Her cantabile style is said to have been shown to perfection in the airs 'If o'er the cruel tyrant,' and 'Let not rage thy bosom firing.' In the latter, the words

I, alas, at once have lost,
Father, brother, lover, friend !

were given with a thrilling pathos that suffused every eye and melted every heart. What her execution of 'The soldier tired' must have been, we may partly conceive from the cadenza, which has come down to us. It is founded, as all cadences should be, upon the melody of the song, and could never be appended

to any other composition. Here she would generally run up to F sharp in altissimo, and always without sinking so much as a comma !

Much later, Incledon used to electrify the audience in the admirable song, 'Thy father! away. I renounce the soft claim;' but the whole opera is a cabinet of beauties.

The pasticcio of 'Love in a village,' contains much charming music. Those who have heard Miss Stephens in Arne's air, 'Gentle youth, ah tell me why,' will never forget the touching expression which she threw into the words 'Go, and never see me more,' where a brief modulation is made into the subdominant of the original key.

The 'Duenna' is another pasticcio, the whole of the music to which is first-rate, having been selected by Sheridan from the purest sources. Some of it is by T. Linley, junr., the friend of Mozart, and whose untimely end (by the upsetting of a boat, if I remember rightly) cost Mozart many tears. The 'rondo overture,' the opening serenade, 'Tell me, my lute,' the song, 'Friendship is the bond of reason,' the trio, 'May'st thou never happy be,' the song, 'Sharp is the woe,' and the duet, 'Turn thee round,' were all written by this young composer. They are all original and all deliciously vocal. Linley resembled Mozart in this, that he always had the right note in the right place.

Many of your readers must remember the triumphs

of Madame Vestris and Braham in what is called the 'ballad opera,' wherein the airs are connected by spoken language, as in Purcell's operas and in the German operas of Mozart. Nothing can be more grateful to the ear of an Englishman than are many of these dramas. Take for instance Arne's 'Comus,' his 'Midas,' his 'Alfred,' and others. There is Arnold's comic opera, 'The Maid of the Mill;' there is Jackson's 'The Lord of the Manor,' containing among other admirable things, the exquisite air, 'Encompassed in an Angel's frame,' and there are the operas of Shield abounding with beautiful melodies, to mention no others.

I have shown you what we have lost, let us now see what we have gained. In the newspapers of every large town in which there is a theatre, you will from time to time see a long paragraph, or series of paragraphs, headed 'English Opera.' You will be told that a 'talented' company from London are regaling the good folks of the place with 'English operas' of the first class, for it is an 'English Opera Company.' Then you will find what must be called, in courtesy, a critique of the performances. But what of the things performed? There will be the 'grand' opera of 'Il Trovatore;' that of 'La Traviata;' that of 'Norma;' that of 'Lucrezia Borgia;' *et id genus omne* (*minus* the recitatives, and otherwise disfigured by cuts), tortured into doing duty to English words. In the orchestra will be found a few players upon

stringed instruments, and a clever conductor with one hand upon a pianoforte and another hand upon the harmonium, filling up gaps and keeping things together. As the words and music were not written for each other it is impossible that the former should be really sung. You can have nothing better than a string of nonsense verses, reminding you of your school days at Eton or Harrow. Perhaps upon the last night of the company's appearance some lovers of music will be attracted to the theatre by an announcement of the 'Beggar's Opera.' But they will soon find that the singers have been so vitiated by their familiarity with trash, that they have little idea of how to sing real English music in their native tongue.

If some enterprising manager would risk a reviving of the true English opera, I have little doubt that his efforts would be ultimately rewarded with success. He could anywhere get together a band capable of playing the simple accompaniments; the voices of his singers, instead of being torn to tatters would long maintain their freshness; and the patronage of people of taste would soon be followed by that of those who only care for what is the fashion of the day.

For more than half a century we have been sliding down the hill in all branches of music, and we have found this to be much easier than we shall find it to

regain the summit, 'Facilis descensus Averni; sed revocare gradum, hic labor, hoc opus est.' '

Thanking you for your courtesy, and asking the pardon of your readers for having trespassed so long upon their patience, I now take my leave of this ungrateful subject.

A LETTER
ON
'THE PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC.'

From the 'Musical Standard' of March 5, 1870.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'MUSICAL STANDARD.'

Sir,—There is at this day so much ignorance of what may be called the philosophy of music, that it may be worth while to touch upon the subject, though of course this can only be done superficially within the compass of a letter.

The essence of man is his will, and the form in which that essence exists is his understanding. His will is the seat of his loves and affections; his understanding is the seat of his perception of truth. Love answers to heat, which can be felt, but not seen; truth answers to light, which can be seen, but not felt. Now, the will and the understanding are so united as to form a one, although their operations are distinct. Every appeal that can be made to man must be either to his will through his understanding, or to his understanding through his will.

The essence of music is sound ; and that mere sound appeals to the will, or feeling, and not to the thoughts of the understanding, is not only true, but capable of proof. Articulate speech is addressed to the perceptions, or thoughts, of the understanding. Thus when you talk with your friend, you think upon the subject of his words ; you perceive the truth or falsehood of what he relates, and you judge concerning the spirit with which he is animated. But the case is far different with respect to the tone of his voice : this corresponds with his state of affection, and it appeals to your own state of feeling. A bystander, who might not catch his words, could know by this tone whether he were friendly to you or angry with you, or whether he were appealing to your pity. A man begs in a different tone to that in which he threatens. Novelists take advantage of this truth, when they describe the tone with which their characters speak when under the influence of any strong passion.

A reader of the orations of Demosthenes, of Cicero, or of Burke, is sometimes tempted to doubt whether the effect which is said to have been wrought upon audiences by some of those orations may not have been exaggerated, inasmuch as he experiences no such strong emotions in himself. But he forgets that a printed speech is like a body without a soul, because the tone of the living voice, which was the vehicle of conveying the speaker's affection, is absent. The

printed language can do no more than appeal to the will through the understanding, whereas the spoken words went home to the will and the understanding as a one. Not only was the force of the arguments perceived, but the passion of the speakers was also felt.

The reason why mere tone is so potent in its operation is because it is capable of modulation, or inflection. The affections of the will, which are endless in variety, accommodate to themselves an equal variety of tones by inflection: hence the will can make itself felt, at the same time that the intellect makes itself understood.

Music may be called inflected sound, because without inflections there can be no such thing as air, or melody. This may be seen in the case of the drum, which is capable only of measure, because it cannot give more than one note. In an orchestra, however, two drums are generally employed—one sounding the key note, and the other its fifth. For proof that these can produce a simple melody I refer your readers to the opening of Handel's 'Dettingen Te Deum.' Neither can sound, without inflections, excite the various emotions of the will. In Pierson's edition of Beethoven's 'Studies' are to be found directions for writing Recitative, which illustrate this. Thus there are examples in notation for expressing 'the question,' for 'an exclamation of astonishment,' for 'tranquil sentiments,' and for 'agitation and violent passion,'

for expressions 'of wonderment and delight,' together with many others—all of which demand inflections of sound. There are also 'harmonies to express sadness and lamentation.'

We are now in a position to see the folly of monotoning a psalm, or other long canticle, in the church. The iteration of a single note is not music, and it cannot therefore produce those effects which naturally flow from music. It may be said, however, that these effects can be produced by the organ accompaniment. But to depend upon the organ is to invert the order of things: it is to make that which should be secondary, principal; and to reduce that which should be principal to the level of a key ciphering, or of a humming-top, or of a railway-whistle.

But though mere tone is nearly worthless without inflections, yet variety of tone is of the utmost value when that tone is inflected. Why else should Nature give soprano and contralto voices to women, and tenor and bass voices to men? Why should we strive to enrich our orchestras with so great a variety of instruments? What composer does not introduce drums and trumpets into his martial music? Who is ignorant that the flute is appropriate to a love song, the oboe to a pastoral ditty, and the horn to a description of the pleasures of the chase?

Allusion has been made to the truth that the will and the understanding in man, though they are distinct in their operations, are so united as to form a one.

The will acts ; the understanding thinks. The former is the seat of love, and the latter is the seat of wisdom. Everything human has relation to both these faculties, since they constitute the essence of the human being. It is by virtue of the understanding that what we call music is an Art, and that it differs from the singing of birds, and from the tones of an Æolian harp. This art is reached by gradation. Thus there are agreeable sounds, such as the murmur of waterfalls, the rolling of thunder, and the singing of birds, which cannot properly be called musical. The song of the cuckoo, however, may be said to contain musical sounds, because that bird makes musical intervals, the closest interval being a major second, and the widest a perfect fourth. He also gives the minor and major thirds at different periods of his stay. A nearer approach to music is made by a peal of eight bells, because here we get the diatonic scale, with its tones and semi-tones in due order. We also get harmony by ringing the bells in couples. Music strictly begins when Time is introduced ; that is, when inflected sounds are measured by bars, and when these bars are collected into rhythmical periods, so as to form regular strains, which strains can be adjoined to poetry and sung by the human voice.

That vocal music is intrinsically the highest order of music I take to be a self-evident truth ; indeed, the late Mr. Jones, of Nayland, went so far as to say, ‘Ever since instrumental music has been made inde-

pendent of vocal, we have been in danger of falling under the dominion of sound without sense.' Even in these days the superiority of vocal music is tacitly acknowledged ; first-rate singers are better paid than first-rate instrumentalists ; and when voices and instruments are employed together, the latter are still *called* ' accompaniments.' Vocal music is not only capable of the highest beauties of expression ; but it has this further advantage, that the passion appealed to being fixed and determined by words, the hearer can know infallibly whether that expression be just.

Everyone hates incongruity, as far as he is able to perceive it, and is delighted with fitness in all things. In the Fine Arts education enables a man to detect incongruities, which escape the notice of those that are uncultivated ; hence the latter are often pleased with music that fills the former with disgust. This may be made to appear by examples.

I take a man, for instance, to a soldier's funeral, to hear the 'Dead March in Saul;' he is probably struck and affected with the music, and calls it 'indeed fine.' I take him soon after to a wedding, and when the bridal procession enters the church the organist strikes up the 'Dead March in Saul.' The man remembers the air, and is forthwith indignant. 'My friend!' I exclaim, 'why are you angry? It was only the other day that I heard you call that music fine!' He would naturally reply, that what was fit for a funeral is unfit for a wedding, for that very reason ;

and that the bride might as well be attired in black, which would be quite as much in keeping. The incongruity is here so gross that the man perceives it, and he is accordingly offended. I next take him to a concert to hear 'Acis and Galatea,' as it was originally written, and he listens to it with pleasure. I again take him to hear it performed with 'additional accompaniments.' This time he is much more delighted. 'What an improvement,' he affirms, 'are those drums and trumpets! Oh, I love drums and trumpets!' I return his own argument upon him. I tell him that what is fit for war is for that very reason unfit for peace, and that drums and trumpets are quite out of place in a pastoral. But I make no impression, because, though he may perceive, or be made to perceive, he does not actually *feel* the incongruity; whereas I, who do feel it, am tormented, as he was tormented at the wedding.

When a well-known preacher introduced secular music into his church, that 'the Devil might not have all the best tunes,' he simply showed an ignorance of which he ought to have been ashamed. Any poor gardener could have told him that the sweetest flower is no better than a weed when out of its place. In music, as in all other things, a man's understanding reacts upon his will in proportion to his experience and knowledge; and his pleasure is heightened and refined in proportion to the sensitiveness of this reaction.

Now-a-days every man who can string a few chords together sets himself up for a composer, and affects much disdain for what he is pleased to call pedantic and obsolete rules. But a man should be master of harmony before he begins to study the art of composition. Thus, in Beethoven's 'Studies,' after a 'system of thorough bass' has been taught, the pupil begins the 'theory of composition,' or counterpoint. In Cherubini's 'Treatise on Counterpoint and Fugue,' he thus commences :—' I suppose the pupil to be already acquainted with the theory of chords, and consequently of harmony.' He further tells the pupil that, when he has mastered the instructions upon fugue, he 'will have no more need of lessons.' Now the pupil will have been taken through the five orders of counterpoint, extending to eight parts; he will have been initiated into imitation in all its phases; he will have studied double counterpoint; and he will have learned to write real fugues in eight parts for two choirs: and all this will have been done before, in Cherubini's opinion, he can have 'no more need of lessons.' If you, my friend, think that this severe study would cramp your genius, know that Handel, Sarti, and Cherubini, had all these things at their finger's ends, and that these composers were among the sweetest of melodists.

The cry at present is for monster orchestras, monster choruses, and monster bands. Nay, upon one occasion it was thought necessary to add the infernal din

of bells, anvils, and cannon! Need we any stronger proof that the golden age of music is past, and that we have sunk into the noisiness of brass and the hardness of iron? The reason why men tolerate these barbarous innovations is because they have come to the mistaking of means for ends. Voices and instruments are now regarded as ends, whereas they are only means: they are the vehicles by which the thoughts of the composer are conveyed, through the medium of the ear, to the heart and mind of the auditor. If a musical subject be intrinsically worthless, all the singers and players in the world can never give it value; they cannot bring more out of it than they find in it. But if the subject be noble in itself, it will need no costly gilding. I will illustrate this by an example. Some years ago the Norwich Choral Society used to have an occasional supper, after which the famous canon, 'Non nobis Domine,' was always sung. It began with one voice or so to a part, the other voices gradually falling in to the number of perhaps one hundred and fifty. The tones used to swell upon the ear and fade into distance, as if they had been wafted by the wind. The effect was so sublimely devotional, that I have seen strangers, who were present by invitation, scarcely able to control their emotion. When the climax was reached, the twitching features and the glistening eye showed the thrilling effect which was produced by the *crescendos*,

to the words 'sed nomini tuo da gloriam : ' only a stock or a stone could resist it.

Let us now look at the composition itself, to see what there is in it. It is a canon in the fourth and eighth below, of only three parts, and of course without accompaniments, and without the charm of the female voice. Often only one note is heard at a time, with or without its repetitions in the octave, and often only two. Nay, there are even grievous infractions of rule. Thus in one place the leading note falls, instead of rising ; in another place the minor seventh rises where it ought to fall ; add to which, consecutive fifths are dimly masked by the prolongation of the bass note of the preceding bar. These progressions would not be allowed in the free style of writing, but they are fully justified by the exigencies of the canon. Rules were made for music, not music for rules. Infraction of a rule, though an evil in itself, is praiseworthy when more is gained by breaking than could be got by keeping it. No one, for instance, would deny that it is wrong to throw corn into the sea ; yet probably the Apostle Paul assisted with his own hands in casting the wheat over-board, 'to lighten the ship' for the saving of men's lives. In 'Non nobis Domine' something is due to the language itself, which is admirably suited to the delivery of pure tone. The musical effect is partly owing to the dignity, propriety, and sweetness of the subject, partly to the solemn harmony,

and partly to the lucidity which enables the ear to follow the melody in all its windings and simultaneously in all the parts. You not only taste the wine, but you see it glowing through the crystal cup. When the second strain successively commences after half a bar's rest, you do not think of the art of the composer; it seems as if the voices come in simply because they are inspired by the theme, and therefore cannot do otherwise. Surely such music must be superior to pieces that require the aid of 'bells, anvils, and cannon,' both in kind and in degree, as much as the highest pleasures of men are superior to the toys that delighted their childhood.

In concluding this letter, I wish it to be understood that I have only just touched the border of the subject; I have merely stated a few irrefragable truths, and made some applications of them, in the hope of setting other heads a-thinking.

Norwich, February 11.

PART II.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

THE LATE MR. GEORGE PERRY.

(From the 'Norfolk News' of Saturday, April 19, 1862.)

THIS excellent musician and able composer died on Shrove Tuesday (March 4), in the 69th year of his age. As he was a native of Norwich, we trust it will gratify the musical readers of this journal to be presented with a few authentic particulars concerning him. For these we are mainly indebted to Professor Taylor and to Mr. Surman, of London. On writing to Mr. Taylor requesting such information of Perry's early life, as we knew could be obtained from no other source, we were favoured with so admirable an account, that, in justice to the Professor, we shall give it in his own words —

‘Although,’ says Mr. Taylor, ‘writing is now toil and trouble to me, I will endeavour to comply with your request.

‘George Perry's father was a turner in St. Gregory's; he used to sing bass at the yearly oratorio, and thus became known to Dr. Beckwith, who introduced his

son into the Cathedral choir. Vaughan was then about to quit it. He (Perry) had a very powerful but not a fine voice, and was chiefly remarkable for his quickness in learning, and for the pleasure he evidently took in singing. This was so apparent, that my brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Reeve, enquired the name of "that boy who always appeared to sing with all his heart and soul?" "Sir," replied Dr. Beckwith, "that boy, Perry, is brimful of music; if you were to prick him with a pin music would run out."

'He never was articled to Dr. Beckwith, but when he left the Cathedral, he was taught to play the violin by Jos. Parnell (who was then one of the lay clerks), and the pianoforte by his son John. Where he acquired his knowledge of harmony I know not, but I suspect from Bond, who was a pupil of Jackson, of Exeter, and who was afterwards Mr. Garland's deputy, Garland having been a pupil of Dr. Greene.

'Perry used to play the violin at the Hall Concert, but he had nothing to do with its management, for he was not even a member of the society. It was at this time, to my surprise, that he brought me the full score of his oratorio, "The Death of Abel," the words of which were written by George Bennett, of the Norwich Theatre. This was performed at one of the Hall Concerts.

'On the resignation of Binfield, Perry succeeded him as leader of the band at the Theatre. While holding this situation, he composed his oratorio "Elijah and

the Priests of Baal,' the words of which were written by the Rev. J. Plumptre. It was performed March 12, 1819, at the Concert Room, St. George's-bridge. He then requested me to select for him the words for another oratorio, which I did from Milman's "Fall of Jerusalem." It was not published till 1834, when Perry had been appointed composer to the Haymarket Theatre, and organist of Quebec Chapel, about the year 1822.

'My removal to London very soon followed, and from that time we very rarely met.'

The above narrative contains, perhaps, nearly all that is now remembered of Perry's Norwich life. We know no more than Professor Taylor does where Perry learned the rudiments of harmony, but he was indebted to the late Mr. James Taylor for his knowledge of fugue. After a performance of one of Perry's oratorios (we believe 'The Death of Abel,') Taylor was complimenting him upon the merits of the work, at the same time adding that 'the choruses would have been none the worse for a little fugue.' To this Perry assented, and honestly confessed that 'Fugue it should have had, if he had known how to write it.' Taylor then delicately hinted that 'if he would accept a few friendly lessons, he should have much pleasure in giving them.' This offer was gratefully received and the lessons immediately commenced. We have frequently heard James Taylor express his astonishment at Perry's aptitude for receiving instruction. A

few days after the very first lesson, Perry brought his master one of the choruses rewritten, and the subject fugally treated. 'Ah,' said Taylor, 'If I had expected this, I would have given you a little more of it.' Taylor would often say, 'It was a pleasure to teach a man like Perry: a hint was enough; Sir, he always anticipated what I had to tell him.' We have the same authority for giving a curious instance of Perry's facility in composition. He would occasionally be writing four songs at once; not indeed, designedly, but to save himself time and trouble. Being too careless to provide blotting paper, and too impatient to wait till his ink was dry, he would place four sheets of music paper at the four sides of his table. On the sheet that chanced to be nearest him, he would write a page of song, No. 1. This being done, he would begin song, No. 2, on the next sheet, and having reached the bottom of the page, he would commence No. 3, and then No. 4, in like manner; so that by the time he again arrived at the first sheet, the ink would be dry and he would turn over and go on with that song, continuing to write till the four songs were all committed to paper. It is possible that the beautiful air, 'See, Rosa, this flower,' may have been one of the melodies produced in this way.

If Dr. Beckwith regarded Perry as a boy 'brimful of music,' Perry, on his part, had a profound veneration for the doctor. He would say, 'Dr. Beckwith is

none of your little dogs : no, no, sir ; the doctor is a great man, he has *a grand outline.*'

We remember to have once seen Mr. Perry lead at a concert in the Bridge-street room, though we forget how it came about. It was in the days of knee-breeches—in the days, too, when the leader was the sole conductor. It being an amateur band, he could not keep them together to his satisfaction with his bow, and therefore stamped with such vehemence, that at last his stocking broke from its moorings, and slowly descended to the middle of his leg. Of course, the ladies tittered, as ladies will titter ; but all this was nothing to Perry, whose heart and soul were so wholly in his work, that he was blessedly unconscious alike of the cause and the result.

Mr. Perry's fine chorus, 'Give the Lord,' from the oratorio, 'The Death of Abel,' which was then unpublished, was performed at the first Norwich Triennial Musical Festival, in 1824, the composer himself conducting it ; Sir George Smart having, with gentleman-like feeling, resigned him the baton for that purpose.

Somewhere about the year 1822, Perry went up to town, having accepted an invitation to undertake the duties of composer and director of the music at the Haymarket Theatre, of which Mr. Morris was then proprietor. Whilst Mr. Perry occupied this post he composed his celebrated opera, 'Morning, Noon, and

Night,' and several others. It was the custom then, as indeed it is now, for the singers to interlard an opera with some of the popular songs of the day. One morning it happened that a parcel of such songs was brought to Mr. Perry, for Madame Vestris, who was then *prima donna*, to try over. They ran through one after another till they came to Horn's then comparatively unknown song of 'Cherry ripe.' This air so pleased the lady that she tried it a second time, and then declared, that 'if she obtained an encore in it she would make it popular.' Mr. Perry had accordingly to arrange it for a full orchestra for performance the same evening. The result was, that it was rapturously encored, and that the publisher (Power) was enabled to sell some thousands of copies. Hence its popularity even to the present day.

Successful, however, as Perry undoubtedly was in dramatic composition, the theatre was not his natural element. He loved the greatness of the sacred style and panted to enrol his name with those of the musical benefactors of mankind. Hence the production and publication, so far as his means would allow, of his oratorios—'The Death of Abel,' 'The Fall of Jerusalem,' 'Belshazzar's Feast,' and 'Hezekiah;' as well as some anthems for particular occasions. He wrote an anthem in D, 'Blessed be the Lord thy God,' for the accession of Queen Victoria, in 1838; 'The Thanksgiving Anthem,' composed on the occasion of the birth of the Princess Royal, in 1840; a very

spirited work, with a melodious treble solo, which was sung by Madame Caradori Allan, when this anthem was performed, at the time, by the Sacred Harmonic Society, with an orchestra of five hundred voices and instruments. To these may be added his own anthem, 'I will arise,' which was written for the London Choir Association.

Not satisfied with the production of these original works, Mr. Perry sought to extend the performance of Handel's Oratorios by writing additional accompaniments to 'The Dettingen Te Deum' and 'Jubilate,' 'Judas Maccabæus,' 'Samson,' 'Israel in Egypt,' 'Jephthah,' 'Deborah,' 'Joshua,' 'Saul,' 'Solomon,' 'Coronation and Funeral Anthems,' 'Athaliah,' 'Esther,' 'Belshazzar,' 'Acis and Galatea,' and the 'Overture' to the 'Occasional Oratorio.' He also arranged for the organ or pianoforte, a folio edition of 'Deborah,' and had commenced 'Belshazzar' and 'Joshua,' with an intention of completing Dr. Clarke's edition of Handel's works;—'labours,' says Mr. Surman, 'which will hand his name down to posterity in black and white, better than any monument of brass or stone.'

It may not be out of place here to mention the modest manner in which Mr. Perry gave his reasons for writing the 'Additional accompaniments.' 'It was not,' he said, 'that Handel's works in their intrinsic substance were capable of improvement,' but 'that the score might be enriched by the employment of

such instruments as Handel himself, it is to be supposed, would have used, had they in his time attained their present perfection.' A recommendation of these 'Accompaniments' was signed by more than twenty distinguished instrumental professors, most of whom are still living.

Yet, valuable as are Perry's contributions to the church and the concert-room, they might have rotted in his closet (like Robinson Crusoe's big boat, which the builder had not strength to push into the water), had he not found a coadjutor after his own heart in his friend, Mr. Surman, of Exeter Hall. This gentleman, animated by a kindred zeal for the cause of sacred music, printed most of Perry's works, doubtless at a considerable outlay of capital, with a view to their performance at Festivals and at the concerts of choral societies. He also exerted himself to bring them out in London, which he did with success. As yet (we cannot write it without a 'tinge of shame'), they are least known, perhaps, in the composer's native city.

'The Death of Abel' was brought out at Weeks'-rooms in the Haymarket. It was performed with success by the Sacred Harmonic Society on March 19, 1841; and again, on May 17, 1845, the principal vocalists then being Miss Rainforth (a pupil of Perry's), Miss Poole, Mr. Hobbs, Mr. Manvers, Mr. H. Phillips, and Herr Staudigl; upon which occasion there were no fewer than six encores. The first performance of his 'Fall of Jerusalem,' in London, was at the

Hanover-square-rooms, where he was assisted by his^s personal friends ; Miss Paton and Mr. Braham being in the number of those who took the principal parts. It was next done by the Cecilian Society, and again (being the third time) by the Sacred Harmonic Society. Portions of each of the above Oratorios were introduced with great success at the Worcester Festival in 1842.

Perry was the leader of a party who met in Mr. Armstrong's school-room, in the Borough ; and here it was that he used to get his oratorios rehearsed. He also had an offer of the post of leader to the Choral Harmonic Society ; but though he required only five shillings per night for his services, so low were the society's funds, that his terms were not accepted.

At the formation of the Sacred Harmonic Society in 1832, Mr. Surman, who filled the double post of conductor and librarian, invited Mr. Perry to come and lead, as the prospects of the society were favourable. Perry consented ; and the members, about sixty in number, continued to meet for the space of two years, in Gate-street Chapel, Lincoln's-inn Fields. In those days, the difficulties with which amateur bodies had to contend were so great, and the pecuniary risk of getting up oratorios was so serious, that the success of this society was, perhaps, almost without precedent. But it was not destined to be long uninterrupted. Some of the managers of the chapel all

at once discovered that it was highly improper for young people to meet together there for the practice of sacred music. As there had been no indecorum or misconduct of which these pious people could complain, or to which they could have been indebted for their illumination, they must (like Miss Pupford's assistant with 'the true Parisian accent') have been somehow or other 'inspired.' However, they ejected the society from their chapel, and then the practice-meetings were held in Henrietta-street Chapel. Here two performances were given with moderate success, but the attendance at the weekly rehearsals was thin, on account of the inconvenience of the locality. The society was at length reduced to so low an ebb, that not one of the members paid any subscription for an entire quarter. It happened upon one wet night when Mr. Perry made his appearance, with his violin under his arm, and Mr. Surman arrived with a load of music in his bag, that they found only one other member to join them in a rehearsal of Handel's 'Messiah!' Men less determined and less enthusiastic would, at that crisis, have deserted their posts. But, no; they preferred adjourning to a neighbouring tavern, where they drank 'success to the society,' and seriously bethought them as to what could now be done. Mr. Perry had three miles to walk to his home, but they would not separate till they had resolved upon endeavouring to get twenty members to put down one guinea each for the purpose of carrying on the society's

business, at their own risk, in some more central situation. This was eventually done, or there had been an end of the Sacred Harmonic Society.

Mr. Perry continued to lead from the foundation of the Society in 1832, to 1848—a period of sixteen years, during the whole of which time he was not absent from a single performance, and he missed only one rehearsal.

In the year 1848, the conductor's baton was wrested from Mr. Surman and placed in the hand (we regret to say the not unwilling hand) of Mr. Perry. If his acceptance of this new position showed a want of right feeling towards the friend to whom he was indebted for his connection with the society, he had soon ample time for repentance: for, after about half a dozen performances, he, too, was in his turn deposed and dismissed.

A few of Mr. Perry's friends then tried to support him in some other society, but their efforts were a failure; and from that time, instead of mingling, as heretofore, with amateurs and professors, he seemed rather to avoid than to court their company.

Perry enjoyed considerable reputation both as an organist and as a teacher. No man could be more indefatigable than he was in the discharge of his professional duties. He was organist of Quebec Chapel, where he had an excellent choir under his command, for about twenty years. For the last fifteen years of his life he held the organ at the church

in Gray's Inn Lane ; and during his possession of both these appointments he was never known to be absent from either church for a single Sunday, till the two last previous to his death. His remains were deposited in the Kensal Green Cemetery, on March 11, in the presence of a few of his old associates, for in the musical world his end was scarcely known.

In his vocal compositions Mr. Perry affected neither the pedantry of the German, the frivolity of the French, nor the effeminacy of the Italian school. He was English to the back bone. In writing for the stage he did not always disdain to injure a fine song by giving it a theatrical close. We may instance in the capital scena, 'Mid hidden rocks that ambushed lay,' and doubtless many other instances could be given.

His sacred works, especially his oratorios, are founded upon the model of Handel. In saying this, however, we would by no means imply that he was a slavish imitator. On the contrary, his subjects were entirely his own. But he aimed at Handel's simplicity and breadth of style. He never went out of his way for the sake of introducing what Shield calls 'fashionable chords.' His part-writing is clear and intelligible. His harmonies are bold and open ; and his accompaniments are generally kept in due subordination to the voices. Like Handel, he wisely husbanded his means, employing particular instruments for particular effects, and reserving his drums and trumpets for a grand climax. His choral com-

positions will always be valuable to many amateur societies which may not possess either the means or the capabilities of doing justice to the more elaborate works of Spohr and Mendelssohn. In order that they may be useful, however, they must become better known. If the Sacred Harmonic Society would purchase one of his oratorios, and complete its publication by printing the whole of the instrumental parts, a great step would be made towards the attainment of this end. An annual performance of such oratorio might not only be profitable to the Society's benevolent fund, but it would also be a graceful tribute to the composer's memory.

THE LATE PROFESSOR TAYLOR.

From the 'Norfolk News' of March 28 and April 4, 1863.

NOT quite a year has elapsed since the last lines, which, in all probability, were ever traced by Professor Taylor's hand for the press, were kindly communicated to this journal for the completion of a memoir of the late Mr. George Perry. We then little thought that we should so soon have to perform for Mr. Taylor what he was assisting us to do for another. But no man is to be much lamented who has run a useful and honourable career of nearly fourscore years. To such an one death cannot be premature, and ought not to be unwelcome.

Mr. Edward Taylor was the great grandson of the celebrated Dr. John Taylor, a man not less beloved for the kindness of his disposition, than he was venerated for his vast learning. Dr. Taylor was born at Lancaster in the year 1694, and came to Norwich (according to Mr. Edward Taylor's account) in 1733. Here he remained till 1757, and here it was that he

produced many of his works, amongst others his famous Hebrew Concordance, which was published in two large volumes folio, and was the labour of fourteen years. Many copies of the frontispiece (a fine portrait engraved by Houbraken) are still extant in this city. Dr. Taylor must have been fond of music, and must also have made it a personal study. This we infer, less from his having published 'A collection of tunes in various airs,' for the use of his Norwich congregation, than from his having been able to prefix thereto 'Instructions in the art of Psalmody.' The airs themselves have no other part, or accompaniment, added than an unfigured bass, but the collection contains many of the finest melodies which are now in use. The instructions were intended to enable a student to sing at sight.

When Dr. Taylor quitted Norwich, his only surviving son, Richard, remained and carried on the business of a manufacturer in St. George Colegate. Mr. John Taylor, father of the subject of this memoir, was a son of the above named Richard. John Taylor was born July 30, 1750. In 1773 he entered into the business of a yarn-maker, in partnership with his brother, in the parish where their father had lived. If not a musical composer, John had the reputation of being at least a tolerable poet, and he was peculiarly happy in writing words for music. His Christmas hymn—

Exulting, rejoicing, hail the happy morning,

was so admirably adapted to the air 'Adeste Fideles,' that it found its way from the Octagon Chapel into the Church of England services, and was long a favourite in the parish of St Peter Mancroft. In April 1777, Mr. John Taylor married Susanna, the youngest daughter of Mr. John Cook of Norwich. Mr. Edward Taylor, the only issue of this marriage with which we are immediately concerned, was born on January 22, 1784, in the parish of St. George Colegate. He was baptised by Robert Alderson (afterwards Recorder of Norwich) when minister of the Octagon Chapel. Out of this arose a good story which Edward Taylor has been heard to tell. One day being under examination as a witness in Court, Alderson questioned him, not very pertinently, as to his *age*. 'Why,' said Taylor, perhaps a little nettled, 'You ought to know it, for you baptised me.'—'I baptised you!' exclaimed Alderson, 'What do you mean?' He never liked to be reminded of his having been a preacher.

In his boyish days Edward Taylor was made to imbibe the usual quantity of Greek and Latin, and the cask ever after retained the flavour of the wine. But music even then was his chief delight. When arrived at manhood he was tall and well formed; he had a fair, though by no means a pallid complexion, a penetrating eye, and a majestic voice, which sounded, in conversation, like the roll of a fine bass drum. In whatever part of the world he had been met it would

have been said at a glance, 'That's an Englishman.' He had that unmistakeable stamp of bluntness and sturdy independence which seems to be an Englishman's birthright. He was proud, not altogether without reason, of his ancestors, whose religious and political opinions he inherited. Hence, he was a Dissenter of the Unitarian school, and what was then called a radical reformer. Deeming himself to be in the right, he of course considered all those who differed from him in the wrong. But being himself consistent he knew how to respect consistency in others. His hostility was confined to men's doctrines and measures; it was never extended to their persons. In a word he was generous, manly, and sincere, and he therefore enjoyed the friendship of good and true men, whatever might be their party or creed.

In a fugitive narrative intended to be chiefly musical, it may suffice to give a rapid sketch of Mr. Taylor's political doings, the authenticity of which may be relied on, since we are indebted for it to memoranda in his own handwriting. So far back as 1808, we find Mr. Taylor recording that he was 'elected a common council man for the fourth time.' He also states that the contest for nominees in the Long Ward was 'the severest ever remembered.' Few people now-a-days could realise the import of those few words. Few understand how much was implied by the once common phrase, 'a battle for the Long Ward.' The combatants would have scorned such mealy-mouthed

appellations as 'Conservative' and 'Liberal,' or indeed any name but that of the colours under which they fought. They were 'Blue and Whites,' and 'Orange and Purples,' the former being what would now be called the 'Liberal,' and the latter the 'Conservative' party. To be a Blue and White or an Orange and Purple, was to be an angel or a devil, as the case might be; the angels of course being those of your own side, to whichever you belonged. Great was the potency of colours. Though not supposed to be worn at municipal elections they were a rallying cry, and they were always at hand to be flouted, like a red rag at a turkey, in the face of the enemy. Even housemaids and children concealed them about their persons in readiness to show them slyly from some window, both to encourage their friends and exasperate their enemies, whenever a 'procession' passed. Great were the preparations for the contest. A sort of civic press-gang prowled the streets by night for the purpose of 'cooping chickens,' which, being done into English, means, carrying men off by force, and keeping them drunk and in confinement, so that, if they could not be got to vote 'for,' it would be impossible for them to vote 'against.' If they could not safely be secured in the city, they were 'cabined, cribbed, confined' in wherries on the river or the broads, or even taken to Yarmouth and carried out to sea. When the day of battle came, great was the shouting, the drinking, the betting, the bribing, and

the fighting, till the longest purse contrived to win the day. Of course the dirty work was done by dirty men. But leading men on both sides were so used to see the thing, that they considered it only part and parcel of an election. It was regarded rather as a limb which could not safely be severed from the body, than as a shabby coat which disgraced the wearer. Besides, palliating rhetoric was not absent. Better do a little evil than surrender a cause essential to the welfare of the state. 'What *we* did' (we honest 'Orange and Purples,' or we pure 'Blue and Whites') 'was done in mere self-defence.' It was always the *other boy* who struck the first blow; the *other servant* who really cracked the china.

Mr. Taylor's electioneering exertions were chiefly confined to serving on committees, visiting clubs, canvassing voters, and haranguing the people. On the platform his strong good sense and nervous eloquence rendered his speeches telling and effective. His words also derived additional weight from the known integrity of his character; and could elections be gained by arguments alone, they would have been more formidable to his adversaries than they were. But there was often a majority which could be won to either side, only by the expression of *golden* opinions. This of course applies chiefly to wards where the parties were pretty nearly balanced.

The year 1808 was a busy one for Mr. Taylor. On May 9 he began a new business, that of an iron-

monger in St. Stephen's at the corner of Rampant Horse-street. He was also at Yarmouth for the third time with the Norwich regiment, being on permanent duty as a volunteer. A gentleman now living well remembers the admiration he felt, as a boy, at seeing Taylor's stately figure, rendered more imposing by his military hat and high feather, make an awful bend to get in at the low door of his new shop. Mr. Taylor was also chosen a deacon of his congregation on July 10.

In 1812, being in London, he had the pleasure of dining with Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Whitbread. It was in this year that the Prince of Wales came into full power, and to Mr. Taylor's great disgust continued 'Mr. Percival and his *crew*,' as he calls them, in their places.

In 1814 a Common Hall was held to petition against the Corn Bill. The business was opened by Mr. Taylor, who drew up the petition and took it up to London.

In 1815, he wisely disposed of his ironmongery business, which probably gave him neither pleasure nor profit, and returned to St. George Colegate. On March 4 in this year he stood a contest, the third time, for nominee of Mancroft Ward. Of course he was beaten, this being an Orange and Purple ward, but he polled 107 votes. However, he was soon after elected a Common Council man, without difficulty, in the Northern Ward, where the Blue and Whites had

always held a large majority. This was on March 16; on May 3 he was elected a member of the Court of Guardians. On February 20 next year, 1816, there was a Common Hall to petition against the property-tax, but it does not appear what part, if any, Mr. Taylor took in it. On October 14, however, at a Common Hall to petition for Parliamentary Reform, he records that 'Messrs. Pitchford, E. Taylor, and William Smith were *for*, and Mr. Firth *against* it.' The petition in favour of the objects of the meeting was moved by Mr. Taylor.

1817. On January 22 Mr. Taylor attended a meeting of deputies at the Crown and Anchor in London, Major Cartwright being in the chair. Next day he was present when Mr. Waithman moved a petition for Parliamentary Reform in the Common Council of London. He this year removed into St. Mary's parish.

1818. In the January of this year we find him visiting Archdeacon Bathurst at South Creake, and dining at Holkham in company with Lord Spencer, Lord Stair, Lord Ebrington, &c. It does not appear that this was strictly a political dinner, though there is some reason to believe that politics had a good deal to do with it. Certain it is that at the county election which took place in June, it was no fault of Mr. Taylor's that Edmond Wodehouse had not to stand a contest for his seat. On the 20th of this month there was a meeting of the freeholders at the

Swan, to invite Mr. Philip Hamond to stand in opposition to Mr. Wodehouse, at which meeting Mr. Taylor was not inactive. Next day he went in person to Westacre, and obtained Mr. Hamond's consent. The Whig aristocracy, however, refused to second the yeomanry in this move, on discovering which Mr. Hamond prudently declined the contest. On July 9 Mr. Taylor went over to Ireland, on a visit to his uncle, the Rev. Philip Taylor, where he remained till August 21.

In 1819, Mr. Taylor was elected Sheriff after a contest with Mr. T. S. Day. The former was evidently the popular candidate, the numbers being, Taylor 807, Day 530.

In 1820, Jan. 24, Mr. Taylor was one of a company of 460 of his own party who had a grand celebration of C. J. Fox's birthday, at St. Andrew's Hall. Among those present were the Dukes of Sussex and Norfolk, Lord Albemarle being in the chair. On May 18, Mr. Taylor went to a dinner at Harling, to celebrate the birthday of Lord Albemarle; and on July 2 he attended the Holkham sheepshearing. On August 2 a common hall was held for the purpose of getting up an address to be presented to Queen Caroline.

On December 2 he took the address up to London, and on the 4th had the satisfaction of presenting it to the Queen at Brandenburg House, in company with Alderman Bolingbroke and Mr. William Smith. There was but one opinion of the character of George IV.;

and with respect to the Queen all the world agreed that she was much to be pitied. Men's passions were so strongly excited, whichever side they took, whether for or against her, that her conduct was viewed through a false medium. Nothing shows this more strongly than the behaviour of the two parties upon the occasion of her melancholy death. The Blue and Whites, many of whom had never put on black for a Royal personage before, were to be seen decked in black and white, like so many magpies; while on the other hand, the Orange and Purples, not content with appearing in their ordinary attire, flaunted about in the gayest colours. One party thought itself inspired by a natural grief, which it would be inhuman not to feel and to express. The other party conceived itself to be animated purely by a pious abhorrence of vice. But in reality the more violent of the factions dressed not for the Queen but for each other. It was a case of 'I bite my thumb at you, Sir.'

In 1821 we find Mr. Taylor dining at Lord Albemarle's, with the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Norfolk, Sir Francis Burdett, and Mr. Coke. He also this year paid another visit to Archdeacon Bathurst. On the 7th of November he was elected Chairman of the Paving Committee; and on the 13th Vice-President of the Norwich Public Library, an institution the interests of which he had always much at heart. On the 11th of December he dined with the celebrated Mr. Cobbett, at the house of Mr.

Clarke, at Bergh Apton. In this year, also, Mr. E. Taylor and his father jointly presented to the Corporation of Norwich the portrait of Thomas Hall, Esq., a liberal benefactor of Norwich, which still graces the Council Chamber of the city.

In the year 1822, Mr. Taylor was actively engaged with political meetings. On January 12 he moved and carried a resolution for *Parliamentary Reform* at a county meeting, assembled for the avowed object of considering *agricultural distress!* On March 5 he attended a reform meeting at Bungay. On April 24 he was at another 'agricultural distress' meeting in Forehoe Hundred, and again moved and carried a resolution in favour of 'Parliamentary Reform.' On May 6 he was at the celebration of Mr. Coke's birthday at Attleborough, Sir Thos. Beevor taking the chair. On May 11 there was a county meeting convened, with the express object of petitioning for reform. The resolutions were written by Mr. Taylor, moved by Sir T. B. Beevor, and seconded by Mr. Southwell. On the 22nd, Mr. Taylor went up to London, for the purpose of being at the Westminster dinner next day. Sir Francis Burdett was in the chair. On September 3, Mr. Taylor waited upon Bishop Bathurst with a deputation from the Eastern Unitarian Society, in order to thank his Lordship for his support of Religious Liberty. On the 5th he passed from the office of Vice-President to that of President of the Public Library.

On November 5, he presided at a dinner of the Norwich Reform Society. On May 3, 1823, he says characteristically, 'I was re-elected a guardian after having been *turned out* for two years.' The only other meeting in which he this year took part, was one held at the Swan, for the purpose of raising a subscription for the Spaniards. Mr. Taylor seconded the resolutions.

On January 19, 1824, he had the honour of dining with the Duke of Sussex at Kensington Palace. The next year, 1825, terminated Mr. Taylor's residence in his native city, though to the end of his life he continued to take a warm interest in whatever concerned its welfare. On May 21, having already made arrangements for giving up his business in Norwich, he went up to London to prepare for making it his future abode. On August 5, he served on the Norwich Grand Jury 'for the last time,' and the next day took his final departure. On the 15th, he joined his brother Philip and his cousin John Martineau in their business as civil engineers, having hired a house for that purpose in York Place, City Road.

It has been seen that Mr. Taylor took a very active part in local politics. He was the first man who ever reported and published the proceedings of the Common Council Room. He was the life and soul of his party at contested elections, whether for the city or the wards.

But Mr. Taylor did not confine his political efforts

to Norwich. Besides taking much interest and lending much assistance at the county elections, he was in correspondence with the opposition leaders in London. It has been already stated that in January, 1817, he 'attended a meeting of *deputies* at the Crown and Anchor, on the subject of Parliamentary reform,' under the auspices of Major Cartwright; and that he was personally acquainted with Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Cobbett, two of the most conspicuous and active opponents of the then existing administration. The country was at that time supposed to be filled with revolutionary clubs and Government spies. A *delegate*, therefore, from a country society to head quarters in London, was closely watched, whatever might be the purport of his mission. To be an object of suspicion in those days was no light matter, since the very fear which fell upon Government, whether well or ill-founded, had a tendency to make its treatment of political offenders severe. Such was the state of things when Mr. Taylor had the misfortune, or as he would have called it, the honour, of having his name in Lord Castlereagh's green bag, on the assumption that he was disaffected. Some have hinted that Mr. Taylor owed his extrication to the secret, but zealous interference of his political opponents. The most honourable and influential among them not only respected him as a man, but valued him as a friend. It was enough for them that Taylor was in trouble, and they knew how to represent him as a loyal volunteer, a true friend

of the Hanoverian succession, and a lover of cathedral music, to those in power, in a tone that would have less the air of a request than a demand. Whether this was so or not we cannot affirm, but the end of all was, that Dr. Fayerman had ultimately to call upon Mr. Taylor, for the purpose of confessing his own mistake and humbly begging Mr. Taylor's pardon.

On January 3, 1826, the year after Mr. Taylor finally left this city for London, he came down to a dinner which was given at the Rampart Horse in his honour. The original intention had been to place his portrait in St. Andrew's Hall, and Sir James E. Smith had actually written some lines to be placed under it, beginning

Avaunt ye base, approach ye wise and good,
Thus, in this Hall once Edward Taylor stood, &c.

but that idea was abandoned, and a presentation of a service of plate determined upon by his fellow citizens. The proposition originated with the strongest of his political antagonists in the Corporation. The plate was given at this dinner at the Rampant Horse, Henry Francis, Esq., against whom Mr. Taylor had entered the lists in the severest contest ever known for the Mancroft Ward, being in the chair, to render the compliment greater.

We must now go back, and bring up Mr. Taylor's Musical Life, as Rapin did the affairs of the church, to the same period.

Mr. Edward Taylor's first music-master was the

Rev. Charles Smyth, a man who was equally remarkable for his eccentricity and his musical learning. Mr. Taylor always spoke with great respect of Mr. Smyth's musical knowledge. How long the lessons continued we have no means of ascertaining, but we afterwards find Taylor gaining instruction with the Cathedral boys, under Dr. Beckwith, at the music room in the Cathedral. He also had lessons in the vestry room of the Octagon Chapel, and he acquired some skill upon the flute and oboe from Mr. Fish. But we believe that his musical education was throughout gratuitously bestowed, out of respect to himself and his family. Doubtless he was greatly indebted for his extensive knowledge of the art, as well as of the German and Italian languages, to his own perseverance in solitary study. For Dr. Beckwith he entertained a profound reverence both as a composer and an organist. We have frequently heard him say, 'I have never heard Dr. Beckwith's equal upon the organ, either in this country or in Germany, the land of organs ; neither is this my opinion only, but that of every competent judge who has heard him, so far as I have been able to collect.' George Perry always spoke of the doctor in the same terms ; and James Taylor called his playing 'brilliancy itself.' Beckwith would frequently play four extempore fugues upon the organ, at the Cathedral and at St. Peter Mancroft Church on a Sunday.

Mr. E. Taylor used to sing at the Octagon Chapel,

which was then distinguished for the excellence of its choir ; but he by no means confined himself to the practice of sacred music. He was the mainspring of the Norwich Glee Club, which contained some excellent voices, and which numbered Harry Staff, J. Youngs, and J. Roe amongst its members. Mr. Taylor, however, found a wider field for the display of his talents as an amateur in the famous Hall Concerts, which he joined in the year 1800, and of which he continued to be the life and soul till his final departure from Norwich.

We are indebted to the kindness of Mr. Henry Browne for the following brief but valuable sketch of the history of the Hall Concert. It stands in the handwriting of M. B. Crotch (who was designated the 'Father of the Society'), in one of the old concert books, and is headed 'A Brief History of the Hall Concert':—

'This society originated from a few persons meeting in the year 1789 to play in the Hall in St. Andrew's, and thence it took the name of the Hall Concert. The number of members amounted at first to six only, but assisted usually by other persons, who afterwards became members, so that they increased to about fifteen, who continued to meet in the Hall in summer, and in a room adjoining in winter, playing sinfonias, singing a few songs, and some of the most familiar choruses. Mr. Thos. Johnson was the first secretary, who was succeeded by Mr. Seth

Coppin (both attorneys), and tickets were first used in 1792.

‘In 1794 the concert removed to a room formerly a small chapel or hermitage, in the Barge-yard, opposite St. Julian’s Church, King-street, which was fitted up with an orchestra containing an organ first played by Mr. Richard Taylor. The room being too small, chorus singing was almost entirely discontinued until 1798, when the present room, formerly the chapel of St. Ethelbert, over the Priory gate on Tombland, being unoccupied, was looked at by some of the members with an anxious wish of obtaining it for a concert room; but there appearing at that time some insurmountable difficulties, it was relinquished, and the Old Assembly Room at the King’s Arms, near Messrs. Gurneys’ bank, was hired, and thither the concert immediately removed.

‘During its continuance there, it was in a very fluctuating state; sometimes having strength to sing double choruses, and at other times scarcely enough to sing a glee.

‘In 1801 the Old Assembly Room and premises adjoining were pulled down to make room for the street leading from St. Michael’s at Plea Church to the Castle Ditches, when the society succeeded in obtaining the present room, namely, St. Ethelbert’s Chapel before mentioned, of the Dean and Chapter, without rent, on condition of putting it in repair, which was done by making a new ceiling four feet

higher than the former one ; covering the dilapidated stone stairs with wood ; and (doing) every thing else that was necessary to make it comfortable. From the year 1806, a rent of three pounds per An :'
* * * * *Cætera desunt.*

To the above account we can only add that Mr. James Bennet and Mr. Merriman, both amateurs, the former playing the violin and the latter the oboe, were undoubtedly two of the original members, as well as Crotch, and that they always used to place their music books against one particular pillar in St. Andrew's Hall. Mr. W. Fish remembers that in the year 1791 or 1792 Miss Coppin, daughter, he believes, of the then master of the Workhouse, used to beat the drums ; and that the concert was sometimes dubbed in derision, 'the Workhouse Concert.' Mr. Fish, and Mr. Shalders of Bethel-street, the publisher of the *Iris*, are by far the oldest surviving members.

As the date of Mr. Edward Taylor's ivory ticket is 1800, he must have joined the society about a year before its removal to what was called the 'Gatehouse.' We can just remember the Gatehouse Concerts when they were in their glory. Dr. Beckwith presided at the organ or pianoforte ; Angell was leader ; Fish, second violin ; Blyth, violoncello ; Sharpe, oboe ; Crotch, trumpet ; Athow, drums ; &c. As for Edward Taylor—besides singing principal bass, and taking the bassoon (his proper instrument)—he was always ready to take a part on the organ, oboe, or

flute, or to beat the drums, when a vacancy had to be filled up in those instruments. Works were then performed which no amateur society in Norwich have been able to attempt, unaided, since. We allude to such oratorios as the 'Messiah,' 'Joshua,' 'Acis and Galatea,' and other great compositions of Handel, to which might be added Purcell's 'Tempest,' Locke's 'Macbeth,' &c., &c. Dr. Beckwith would get one of his boys from the Cathedral to sing Purcell's 'From Rosie Bowers,' or one of Haydn's lovely canzonetts, And the glees were the finest that could be selected.

One night Edward Taylor stood up to sing but continued silent at the end of the symphony. Angell, who was leading, not knowing what was wrong, but surprised that the song was not taken up at the proper place, stopped the band by tapping the back of his fiddle with the bow, and recommenced the symphony. When the voice should have come in, seeing Taylor standing silent as before, he called out, 'Mr. Taylor, why don't you begin?' 'Sir,' said Edward Taylor, 'when those ladies have done talking, I will, but not before.' The late Alderman Browne, who sat amongst the audience, immediately exclaimed, 'You are perfectly right, Mr. Taylor; I am only surprised that people should come to a room like this and not know how to behave better.' The ladies, and a young gentleman who was with them, though they had made themselves conspicuous by laughing and talking during the progress of the music,

and justly subjected themselves to this reproof, got up and left the room as soon as the song was ended. Next day the young fellow called upon Mr. Taylor, who then lived in St. Stephen's, with a card in his hand, to 'demand satisfaction for the insult he had received the evening before in the presence of ladies.' Edward Taylor's answer was—'Young man, there's the door; if you don't get out of my shop, I'll give you the satisfaction of kicking you out'—a strong hint, which needed no repetition.

Mr. Taylor would never permit the rule which existed against any marks of applause or disapprobation being allowed on the part of the audience to be broken. If clapping commenced, he was always the first to put it down. He would say, 'If people may clap, they may hiss; I don't choose to be hissed.'

In those days it was the custom for the members to have an annual supper together. Of course music formed part of the entertainment, and Taylor was always one of those who took part in the catch 'Look, neighbours, look,' to add to the humour of which, the singers tied their handkerchiefs over their heads, the better to personate old women.

In the year 1815 the late Dean Turner and the Chapter gave the members of the Hall Concert notice to quit possession of the room in St. Ethelbert's Gate. At this crisis of the society's affairs the late Alderman Browne (who had always been their firm

supporter, and whose son Henry had joined the band as a violoncello player in 1810) offered to build a room for them, according to their own plan, in St. George's, Bridge-street, upon the estate which had been occupied by the 'Norwich Flour Company,' the society undertaking to pay five per cent. interest on the outlay. Mr. Taylor states in his memoranda that on December 27, in that year, 'Messrs. Athow, Blyth, and Shickle contracted for the repair of the new concert-room for 270*l.*;' and that 'on October 17, 1816, the new concert-room was opened.'

The society continued to exist until 1834, when its dissolution took place; and in the month of October in that year, the estate, organ, orchestra, and music were sold. The affairs of the society were wound up by Mr. Henry Browne, who paid to each member his share of the proceeds of the sale. We here quote a letter which Mr. Browne received from Edward Taylor at the period of this settlement, because it shows the deep interest which the latter still felt upon this subject, and all matters connected with it.

'Many thanks,' writes Mr. Taylor, 'for your obliging letter, and for the trouble you have taken in winding up the affairs of the Hall Concert. I will call at Hankey's for the amount when I have occasion to go into the city. I deeply regret the extinction of a society in which I spent so many happy hours, and which was so beneficial in its musical operations. I never can forget how much I owe it.'

At the Bridge-street room, Mr. Taylor showed both his readiness to oblige and the great compass of his voice, by relinquishing the bass part in the glees to Mr. David, himself taking the tenor. In 1821, on January 26th, the floor of the concert-room caught fire from the furnace flue having been too much heated. There had been a concert on the evening of the night of the fire, and it was thought to be a curious coincidence that the music books, which had been left upon the stands, remained open at the chorus 'See the new light!'

Before we dismiss the subject of the Hall Concert, we may add that here Mr. Taylor used to sing the songs he best loved. He would put Purcell's noble Recitative and Air, 'Ye twice ten hundred Deities,' into the bill, and would say just before it came on, 'I am now going to sing a song which will please nobody but myself;' so well did he love music, and so little did he value worthless praise. Calcott's 'Pilot' and his 'Sisters of Acheron;' Handel's 'Del minacciar del vento,' from the opera of 'Otho;' and Smith's 'Battle of Hohenlinden,' were also in the number of his favourites. Yet he did not refuse to sing the music then in vogue, such as the opera songs of Rossini, and others. Between the acts of the concert, fun would be going on in the retiring-room, where a tenor and a soprano from the Theatre, and others who were willing to assist at the concert, were admitted. Mr. Gattey, who played the flute at the Theatre, and who was

then very young, allowed himself to be wickedly persuaded that he had a talent for the stage, and to be tormented into giving a display of his powers. We believe he attempted a speech from 'Hamlet.' Edward Taylor took up the following speech, whatever it might be, and so they went on, alternately breaking down, and being hissed or applauded alternately, till the director came in, much frightened, to say, that 'time had long been up, and the audience did not understand the meaning of the noise.'

It was a standing rule at the Hall Concert, that one of the Grand Concertos of Corelli, of Handel, or of Scarlatti, for stringed instruments, should always have a place in the programme. Since the dissolution of the society, these noble compositions have ceased to be heard in Norwich. The same may be said with regard to the Trios of Corelli, and Handel's Oboe Concertos, in which the Obligato part used to be delightfully executed by Mr. William Millard. As the concerts took place weekly, and always contained songs with full band accompaniments, they formed a better school for the training of amateurs than we have since had, or are likely to have again.

It may be right to add here, that Mr. Taylor did not confine his services to the Orchestra. He was much employed in writing words, copying music, and even composing, for the Hall Concert. A chorus of his, called 'Sound the loud timbrel,' with band accompaniments, was occasionally done. Besides singing in

this society, at the Octagon Chapel, and in the Glee club, he used to take the bass songs in a selection from the 'Messiah,' on a Christmas day, at the church of St. Peter Mancroft. He also sang at the annual Oratorios at the Cathedral, where he was a kind of director of the chorus, and where Mr. Fish for many years afforded his gratuitous services as leader.

Upon the discontinuance of these performances, because they had ceased to be sufficiently remunerative, it was determined to try the experiment of having a Festival upon a much grander scale than had hitherto been attempted in Norwich. The result was the Festival of 1824, the first of those triennial celebrations which have lasted up to the present day.

We learn from the 'Quarterly Musical Review,' which was edited by the late Mr. R. M. Bacon, who was also at that time Editor of the 'Norwich Mercury,' that at the Festival of 1824, 'Mr. Bacon, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Athow, were nominated a committee for the entire conduct of the musical department.'—Vol. vi. p. 434. The same authority says, a little further on, 'Mr. Taylor undertook the formation of a Choral Society, which he accomplished with a degree of knowledge, skill, and perseverance, that cannot be too highly praised.' Again, 'The Musical Committee then decided upon the following vocalists and instrumentalists,' &c. From all which it would appear that the musical labours of getting up the Festival rested pretty equally upon the shoulders of the triumvirate.

But it is our duty to show that such was far from being the case. To Mr. Bacon, indeed, belongs the merit of having paved the way for the Festival, by a series of brilliant articles, thrown out from time to time, perhaps for years, in the columns of the 'Norwich Mercury.' Thus no doubt that gentleman rendered important service to the cause. But in the musical committee of three, Mr. Taylor's two associates, like the wings upon a stage sylph, were rather for ornament than use. We are indebted to Mr. Robert Fitch (than whom no man was ever more assiduous in seeking, or more careful in preserving, records of our local worthies) for evidence which will be found conclusive upon this point. Mr. Fitch had written to Mr. Edward Taylor to request that gentleman to furnish him with an account of what share he had had in the management of the first Musical Festival. The following is Mr. Taylor's reply, bearing date March 25, 1847:—

'When the Norwich Festival was resolved on in 1823, I made the entire Selection (morning and evening), I engaged every performer, I selected the entire band, and I formed and trained the Choral Society.

'I have done the same for every subsequent Festival (until the last), with the exception of having anything to do with the Choral Society or any of the country performers.

'Every Oratorio brought out (and a new one *was*

always brought out) was translated and prepared for performance by me. These were

The Last Judgment	Spohr.
The Crucifixion	"
The Fall of Babylon	"
The Deluge	Schneider.
Redemption	Mozart.
The Death of Christ	Graun.
The Christian's Prayer	Spohr.

'All these were performed for the first time at Norwich.'

It will be seen by the above how little Mr. Taylor left for anybody else to do !

But Mr. Taylor's statement is indirectly confirmed by the 'Quarterly Review' itself ; for therein we read that 'The Hospital Board presented to Mr. Taylor a piece of plate of fifty guineas value, for his services in raising and instructing the Choral Society, and for his *general assistance* ;' whereas we have not found it recorded in that journal that his two coadjutors received so much as a vote of thanks. We may here add, from the 'Quarterly,' 'There was also a disappointment from Mr. F. Novello's absence. Mr. E. Taylor, with the utmost willingness, consented to supply his place.' We well remember this circumstance, as well as the applause which was accorded to one of the concerted pieces in which he sang. The other singers bowed to the audience as usual, but Mr. Taylor turned away without making the slightest motion of acknowledgment. He would not detract from the claims of the-

profession by letting it be supposed for a moment that he thought the clapping in anywise intended for *him*.

In this place we may give a few gleanings from Mr. Taylor's Norwich life, before we follow him to London.

It is remarkable that in his occasional jaunts to the metropolis he jots down his visits to the theatres, without ever mentioning the Opera. Thus, he says, 'May 19, 1812, saw Mrs. Siddons in "Queen Catherine" '; 'June 7, 1814, saw Kean in "Richard III." '; 'May 20, 1816, saw Miss O'Neil at Covent Garden, in "Mrs. Beverley" '; 1817, 'August 22, to September 1, saw Kean in "Othello," "Bertram," "Sir Giles Overreach," "Sir E. Mortimer," "Octavian," and "Paul." ' But not a word about going to the Opera. The fact is, that he probably did not go, because the music which happened to be done was, in his opinion, not worth hearing. Nothing is more painful to a man of refined and cultivated taste than to have to hear first-rate singers and players wasting their powers upon trash. He tells us, however, about musical performances—such as his going on March 26, 1818, to sing at Swaffham upon the opening of a new organ. Again, August 17, 1820, 'Went to the Festival at Yarmouth,' and he names the principal singers. In 1821, August 10, he sang at the opening of an organ at Loddon, and in 1823 he attended the Birmingham Festival.

It has before been stated that on August 15, 1825, Mr. Taylor entered upon a new course of life in London

in connection with his brother Philip and Mr. John Martineau, who were civil engineers. Had the business proved lucrative, there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Taylor would have left it. It is certain that when he went to live in London nothing was further from his thoughts than that he would ever embrace music as a profession. He says himself, in an entry made in his diary on the day when he first came out as a public singer—‘Although I never should have *chosen* music as a profession, yet I considered it as an act of duty to employ those powers for the benefit of my family which I fortunately possessed. My wish and hope is not to leave business, but the events of last year’ (this was written March 28, 1827) ‘having materially reduced my income, and placed the whole derived from that source in jeopardy, I cannot look that way for any permanent resource.’

Mr. Taylor began anew the battle of life by taking private pupils. From the first moment of his entering the musical profession, his classical attainments, his skill as a translator, his superior mental powers, and his extensive musical research were honestly and fully recognised.

On March 28, as may be gathered from what has been already said, Mr. Taylor made his ‘first appearance’ before a London audience as a public singer. His *début* was at Covent Garden, at the oratorios under the management of Sir H. R. Bishop. The song he chose was ‘The Battle of Hohenlinden,’

composed by C. Smith, and the reception he received from a very crowded audience was, to use his own words, 'exceedingly favourable.' Whether Edward Taylor was nervous under this ordeal it is impossible to say ; but we remember his once telling a young flute player who had made a wrong note in the 'Dead March in Saul'—'You were nervous, but you will get over it.' 'Ah!' said the other, 'you don't know ; you never were nervous.' 'Why, I came out as a flute player,' said Mr. Taylor, 'in Arne's "Overture to Artaxerxes," the easiest thing I could pick ; and all I know is, that you might have knocked me down with a straw.' He says in his journal of this year—

'March 29.—I sung at the Hanover Square Rooms, in Dr. Crotch's "Palestine," two solos and three concerted pieces, and I hope with some credit.'

'June 19.—Went to a concert at Ipswich.'

'June 26.—Attended the Oxford Festival with Madame Pasta, Madame Caradori, Miss Stephens, Messrs. Vaughan, Phillips, and Curioni.'

'September 18.—Sung at the Norwich Festival. The band consisted of 350 performers, Mr. F. Cramer leader, and Sir George Smart conductor. Madame Pasta, Madame Caradori, Miss Stephens, Miss Bacon, Messrs. Braham, Vaughan, Terrail, Signor Zuchelli, and myself, the principal singers. I was received with very great applause by my old friends, and I hope added something to my musical reputation.'

‘October 1.—Sung at Liverpool. Principal singers nearly the same as at Norwich. The band was on a much smaller scale, and the arrangements in general not so good.’

In justice to Mr. Taylor we shall now give the critiques which appeared on his performances in this and the following year in the ‘Quarterly Musical Review,’ which was, as we have said, conducted by Mr. R. M. Bacon, and which may be considered good musical authority.

NORWICH FESTIVAL, 1827.

‘Mr. E. Taylor took a vast stride—a station, indeed, which his best friends could hardly have hoped he could ever fill. Meeting Zuchelli, the most splendid bass in Europe, upon his own ground, namely, in “O, Nume Benefico,” Mr. Taylor appeared to stand upon the same plane; and his oratorio songs were marked by intellect, feeling, and sound musical taste.’

LIVERPOOL, 1827.

‘In the sacred music Mr. Taylor had his full share of credit, and upon the whole is thought to have sung even better than at Norwich.’

SALISBURY, 1828.

‘The principal novelty in this (Friday) morning’s performance was the selection from Haydn’s Second

Mass, adapted to English words by Mr. E. Taylor, for the last Norwich Festival. We are glad to find that so splendid a composition as this is attracting the notice it deserves. Indeed, Mr. Taylor had here full scope for his powers, which are not those of the mere voice, fine as that voice really is. The department of the bass from "For behold darkness shall cover the earth," to "Zitti, Zitti," was entrusted to him, and in the great variety of styles in which he was employed he obtained almost equal credit. If the provincial journal reflects the public sentiment, he has every reason to be satisfied with his reception, for the Editor says, "The Fall of Zion (adapted by him from the works of Paisiello) was the perfection of correct and grand singing," yet his "Non più andrai" gained him the most applause.'

DERBY, SAME YEAR.

'The county journal says, "Mr. E. Taylor sang 'The Fall of Zion,' by Paisiello. The recitative was particularly distinguished by dignity and solemnity of intonation. We had not previously, during the whole of the music meeting, heard this gentleman to such advantage, and although in some pieces he had prepared us to expect everything from a voice so powerfully expressive in its depth, yet we scarcely expected such majestic, and we may say, terrible energy." Of his own song, "O, Peace," it says, "the mildly expressive music with which this song commenced, and

the bold contrast of the second part, are highly creditable to Mr. E. Taylor's talents as a composer, while his execution of it proved his skill and taste as a singer."

YORK, SAME YEAR.

'Mr. E. Taylor, by his science, taste, and splendid voice, has already secured a far more eminent altitude than has ever been gained by a singer who came so late into the profession. Of this the demonstration is that there has scarcely been a Festival this year at which he has not been engaged.'

In this year was published 'Airs of the Rhine,' accompaniments by William Horsley, Mus. Bac. Oxon., the poetry translated by Edward Taylor. Of Mr. Taylor's brief sketch of German music prefixed to this collection, the *Quarterly Musical Review* says it is 'so agreeably written, and contains so many authentic and interesting particulars, that we must do him the justice to give it a place at length. It will speak more for the publication than anything we can say to interest the reader.'

Amongst Mr. Taylor's great musical friends was Dr. Hague, Professor of Music at Cambridge. Dr. Hague pressed Mr. Taylor very strongly to accept the degree of Doctor of Music, which the latter resolutely declined on the score that it would oblige him to subscribe to the Articles of the Church of England,

to which, as a consistent Dissenter, he was wholly averse. He simply said, 'I cannot.'

At the Norwich Festival of 1830, Mr. Taylor introduced Spohr's Oratorio of 'The Last Judgment' for the first time into this country, the words being translated and adapted to the music by Mr. Taylor himself. This was followed at subsequent Festivals by other oratorios of the same composer, which, for originality, richness, and beauty, are unrivalled in their way. After the performance of 'The Last Judgment,' Mr. Taylor had a strong desire to become personally acquainted with Spohr, and one day getting an invitation from Mendelssohn to visit him and his family, at Dusseldorf on the Rhine, where Spohr then was, the invitation was accepted, and thus Mr. Taylor first became known to the illustrious composer, with whom he formed a friendship which lasted as long as they both lived.

After the performance of 'The Crucifixion,' Spohr and Mr. Taylor were travelling outside the coach to London, when the former expressed a wish to write another oratorio for Norwich, but said that he was at a loss for a subject. Mr. Taylor then suggested 'The Fall of Babylon.' This led to a chat about the effects which might be introduced in the way of contrast, &c., and ultimately Spohr promised to write the oratorio, if Taylor, on his part, would write the book of words. The bargain was struck, and the result was a work which will live to the end of time.

As an instance of Spohr's implicit trust in Mr. Taylor, it may be related that when Spohr was to play at one of the Philharmonic concerts, he wrote to his friend to make all arrangements for him with the directors as to terms, &c. All that Mr. Taylor could induce the directors to give was fifteen guineas. Spohr came and played without having the remotest idea of what he was to be paid ; and when, after the concert, Mr. Taylor put a note into his hand containing a cheque for the fifteen guineas, he put it into his pocket without either looking at it or asking a question about it. Neither, whatever may have been his surprise when he discovered the amount, did he ever allude to the subject.

At the Norwich Festival of 1836, the expenses exceeded the receipts by 231*l.* 5*s.* 10*d.* We give an extract from a letter written the following year by Mr. Taylor to Mr. Henry Browne, which will be read with pain, because it shows that Mr. Taylor received far other treatment than he deserved at the hands of the then committee of management.

'I hear,' says Mr. Taylor, 'of the discord engendered by the winding up of the Festival with much concern, and which seems to threaten the existence of future ones. *How* it happened that the last terminated so unprofitably has always been a mystery to me. I think it ought not.

'I can't say but that I felt some surprise that the auditors seemed to intimate in their report that they

had been unable to obtain vouchers for the expenditure, since I wrote to Mr. G. Chapman several months ago stating that, to the best of my belief, Mr. T. Steward held the vouchers for all the engagements I had made (including all the London instrumentalists and chorus), but that if any further explanation or information was needed, I was most anxious to give it. Hearing nothing from him, I concluded that the auditors were in possession of all they wanted from me (if not, it was their own fault); and I was rather surprised to find their recorded expression in the newspapers of a general want of the information they needed.

‘The task of engaging the London performers is, to me, an irksome and thankless one. I am pestered with applications which I am obliged to refuse; and, knowing how essential economy is to the very existence of the Festival, I am constantly obliged to fight a battle about terms. No band in the kingdom is engaged on the same terms as the Norwich one, but it requires an intimate knowledge of the situation, abilities, wants, and other engagements of the parties to accomplish this. For all this labour I don't receive a shilling, nor for the time I devoted in preparing the different works which have been produced at successive Festivals. I receive at Norwich just what I have the following week at Worcester, where my duties are confined to the orchestra, and begin and end with the week. All this I am willing to do, although I

have not received even a thank for it; but I did not anticipate from those who had to examine the Festival accounts (in which the engagements I made formed a large feature) a sweeping expression of dissatisfaction on account of want of information.'

Any comment upon this extract would be superfluous. We can only express our admiration of the temper and dignity with which Mr. Taylor, when smarting under a sense of injustice, could open his heart to a friend. The letter above quoted is dated November 27, 1837, being the same year in which Mr. Taylor had been elected Gresham Professor of Music. He thus alludes to this event, in continuation: 'Allow me to thank you for your kind congratulations on my recent appointment to the Gresham Professorship. I had very little expectation of success, and on the morning of the election had only the promise of a *single* vote. The contest excited a great deal of interest, and I believe the result is approved by the majority of the profession. The place has been, for 200 years, a mere sinecure, generally held by persons wholly ignorant of music. I hope to do something to render it useful to the art. I know that a great deal is expected from me, and I will endeavour, as far as I have the power, not to disappoint the public expectations. I am going in a week to lecture at Edinburgh, and then at Manchester. My first Gresham lectures will be the latter end of January, after which I am engaged at the London, and then at the Royal

Institution. These engagements, added to my other professional avocations (which don't diminish), leave me scarcely any leisure.'

In 1838, Mr. Taylor published his 'Three Inaugural Lectures,' which he dedicated to the trustees of Gresham College. The first of these lectures gave Professor Taylor's view of 'the purpose and objects of the Gresham music lecture;' the second contained a picture of 'the life and times of Sir Thomas Gresham with especial reference to music;' the third described 'Gresham College, its glory and its destruction.' These lectures were replete with fervid eloquence, strong good sense, immense musical research, and sound instruction. But Mr. Taylor was not content with reading a lecture, however good, or however carefully prepared. He announced his intention of illustrating his subjects, by having some compositions of the masters who might be under discussion well sung in parts by a competent choir. The trustees consented. Amateurs of distinction and professional men of high repute readily lent their aid; and the consequence was that the theatre soon became crowded with eager and attentive audiences. As a sample of the attraction which Professor Taylor could throw into his style, take the following description of music, which we quote from his first lecture :—

'The empire of music may with truth be said to be universal, and the pleasure which it is capable of diffusing seems to overspread all existence. If the

song of the lark is its jocund and instinctive welcome to the new-born day, we are also taught that the highest intelligences circle their Maker's throne with songs of praise ; and every intermediate link of the chain which descends from heaven to earth vibrates at its touch. Music is the language of nature, and is, for that reason, a beautiful, an expressive, a varied language. It echoes in the forests and the groves, it whispers in the breeze, it murmurs in the brook, it rushes in the torrent, and roars in the tempest. Its presence is everywhere—on earth, sea, in air, in the world that is, and in that which is to come. There is music in every accent of joy ; there is music in every response of gratitude ; there is music in the plaint of sorrow, and there is music in the voice of pity. We meet and own the power of this language in every walk of daily life,

In every burst of sympathy,
In every voice of love.

Suppose the world destitute of all these sweet and melting accents, these solemn and majestic voices, this daily and hourly appeal to the heart and the imagination ; suppose this enchanting and endless variety all withdrawn, even for a short and single day, and in its stead, dull monotony or death-like silence. Oh, how would the most insensible heart and the obtusest ear long and pray for its return, and own the beneficence of that Power which had made all nature vocal !'

There is something so characteristic in a remark made near the end of this lecture that we cannot resist the temptation of quoting it. 'Many musical opinions,' says the Professor, 'I have seen reason to change ; many prejudices I have had cause to abandon ; and I often look back with wonder and shame at the confident tone with which imperfect information and immature judgment led me to maintain them. I am a learner yet, and so I shall remain to the end of my life.'

But when it began to be discovered that Professor Taylor was not only earnest, but successful, in his endeavours to create a taste for good music in the people ; that he constantly held up the noblest examples in his art to their admiration ; and that he exposed mediocrity, wherever he found it, however popular it might be, the professional mind became rather uneasy. The worshippers of 'the great goddess Diana' (though of course there were many honourable exceptions) began to be jealous of this new apostle, who had so lately sprung from the ranks of the amateurs. But this was not all. It was found out that the sound and honest criticisms in the *Spectator*—the best that were published in this country—proceeded from his pen ; and moreover that it was not *correct* for 'a professional man' to 'sit in judgment' upon 'his musical brethren.' Had Professor Taylor condescended merely to puff 'his musical brethren,' both in and out of season, doubtless the thing would have

been deemed 'correct' enough. But he felt it his duty, as Gresham Professor of Music, to instruct the people by all the means in his power—without, as well as within, the walls of his own theatre. He would thus be carrying out the noble intentions of the founder. He thought, too, that the Profession ought to be for the Art, as well as the Art for the Profession. Fatal mistake! 'Continuo venti volvunt mare.' Immediately the sky began to lower. He was not the man to be openly attacked, but his influence might be secretly undermined. Without exactly knowing how, or why, he must have felt a chill and blight around him. The press which had set up Spohr as an idol, now began to damn that illustrious composer with 'faint praise.' The innocent public, who swallow music as they swallow medicine (*because it is prescribed for them*) without understanding how one or the other is *composed*, began to find out that the compositions which they had once admired, or at least affected to admire, were 'really somewhat dull.' But thoughtful men, who knew the intrinsic value of Spohr's compositions, remembered that he was the friend of Professor Taylor; and that Taylor had laid the foundation of his fame in this country by bringing out his splendid oratorios at the Norwich Festivals. This of itself was significant, but this was not all. Mendelssohn, a musician of vast learning, indefatigable industry, and consummate skill so far as construction is concerned, at length entered the lists with Spohr as a composer.

of oratorios. Of Mendelssohn's 'Songs without Words,' of his 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' and of his pianoforte and some other instrumental compositions, it would be difficult to speak too highly. There are two opinions of his merits as an oratorio writer. His first oratorio, 'St. Paul,' can scarcely be called a success. His 'Elijah' was always a favourite with the public, and it contains some good descriptive music; indeed, description was Mendelssohn's strong point. Some of the press, however, not content with giving this oratorio the praise which was its due, affected to consider 'Elijah' inferior indeed to the 'Messiah,' but in such an artful way, that the opposite conclusion might be drawn by the reader. It is not for us to pretend to fathom motives, but it is very remarkable that the efforts first made to elevate Mendelssohn in this new walk were contemporary with those by which it was sought to depreciate Spohr.

In the year 1845, Professor Taylor published, in the 'British and Foreign Review,' an article headed 'The English Cathedral Service; its Glory, its Decline, and its Designed Extinction.' This was subsequently published, by permission of the proprietor, in the form of a thin octavo volume. It was a masterly defence of the musical services of our cathedrals, and of the choirs, against the spoliations of the Deans and Chapters, which had been silently and surely going on ever since the time of Queen Elizabeth. It made a strong sensation at the time, and even now, whoever would

strike a blow for the cause of cathedral music (which, in Professor Taylor's opinion, is the salt which can alone save the musical taste of the people from corruption) will find the best weapons ready to his hand contained in this little volume.

But it is a hard thing to kick against the pricks. Professor Taylor found that though he had right on his side, the might of the world was against him, and this must have sometimes tinged his mind with sadness. A shade of this feeling will be discovered in the following extract from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Eaton (the President of the Norwich Choral Society) on December 21, 1847. He says, 'As President of the Purcell Club, I am editing an edition of the words (sacred and secular) which he set to music, with an introduction to each of his operas. At our next anniversary we shall do the "Tempest," having done "King Arthur," "Dido and Æneas," "Bonduca," and several of his odes. This work, of which we print only three sheets in a year, is solely for the members of the club. I take great interest in it, and the more I know of Purcell the more true do I find Dr. Beckwith's remark to me when, as a boy, I was expressing my admiration of his music, "The longer you live, and the more you study Purcell, the more you will admire him."

'But what know or care his countrymen about him? Nothing. We are going to put up a statue to Mendelssohn—a foreigner—who had not a tithe of Purcell's genius, but the English Orpheus is forgotten,

while of the resting-place of Arne (to whom we owe "God save the King," and who was the composer of "Rule Britannia") there is no mark or sign whatever.

'Don't wonder that I am unknown in the present musical world. I find no associates in it, and belong to another age.'

That the man to whom we owe so much should have had reason for writing thus, shows that 'there is something rotten in the state of'—music.

Professor Taylor, who had been long a widower, died with the utmost tranquillity on the 12th ult., at his house at Brentwood. He had three children, all of whom survive him—a son, Mr. John Edward Taylor, who was with him in his last moments, and two daughters, one of whom is married and lives in Germany, her sister living with her.

We believe that Mr. Taylor left injunctions that his manuscripts should not be published, which is surely to be regretted. If his rare and valuable musical library, the acquisition of which was the labour of a life, should be sold, we trust that it will not go piecemeal to the hoards of individual collectors, but be bought for the use of Gresham College and its future musical professors.

Some apology is due from us to many kind friends who have favoured us with authentic and interesting particulars concerning Professor Taylor, which we have been wholly unable to employ, for want of time

and space. We have been obliged rather to hint at the nature of the Professor's labours than to attempt giving any detail of them. But no one ought to expect that materials which would not be exhausted by several octavo volumes, could be satisfactorily condensed in a newspaper memoir. It is to be hoped that Professor Taylor will have a biographer worthy of him, and capable of doing him that justice which the nature of things forbids to be done in the columns of a weekly journal.

Since the above was in type, valuable information has been obtained, of which we would gladly have availed ourselves, had it been earlier received. We must, however, find room for what follows :—

In an interesting letter written by Professor Taylor to Spohr, after his return from a visit to the latter at Cassel in 1840, he says—‘ I went to Offenbach, to visit Dr. Becker, with whom my son resided some months. There I saw André, who showed me his valuable Mozart MSS. With what reverence did I take the original score of “ Die Zauberflöte ” into my hands.’

The following is characteristic :—‘ At Ghent, where I rested again, I scored a great many compositions of Orlando di Lasso, and some other of the early Flemish masters. There is a Conservatorium of Music here, but I was surprised to find the pupils and their master equally ignorant of even the name of Orlando di Lasso. *I told them they ought to feel ashamed of their ignorance.*

They begged copies of some of the scores I had made.'

The following extract from a letter from Mr. Rintoul to Professor Taylor, on the latter retiring from the musical department of the 'Spectator,' dated May 15, 1843, is too important to be withheld :—

'My dear Mr. Taylor,—Your letter is a sad remembrancer of the tenure of all mortal engagements and pleasures, that they come to an end ; and that the time is drawing on when with me, too, those pursuits that have occupied me so busily for so many years must be relinquished. When that time comes, I may not hope for higher approval, either of conscience or the judgment of other men, than to find that my career has been as honourably and usefully distinguished as yours. I can bear willing testimony to the high aims, the great ability, the persevering zeal, and undeviating punctuality, with which you have upheld the cause of good music in my journal for the long period of fourteen years. I believe that a selection from your writings in the "Spectator" during that period would comprise a body of the soundest and best musical criticism in the language ; and when you retire, I know not that any second man in England is qualified to sustain the elevated standard that you have raised,' &c.

With all this we cordially agree, and trust that a selection from Mr. Taylor's contributions to the 'Spectator' will be made and published.

There has of late been an agitation for a new musical college ; but let the next Gresham Professor only do his duty as earnestly as did the last, and no new college will be needed ; we believe it would do more harm than good.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND DOCTRINES
OF

MR. JAMES TAYLOR,

ORGANIST.

(From an unpublished Manuscript.)

JAMES TAYLOR was born at Norwich, on the 7th of October in the year 1781. His father, who carried on the trade of a baker in that city, died either before, or very soon after, the birth of this son. Had the father lived, James would have been brought up in the Protestant religion; but Mrs. Taylor was a Roman Catholic and she naturally instructed her son in the tenets of her own faith, to which he strictly and conscientiously adhered through life. The father never locked or bolted his outer doors, being of opinion that 'locks, bolts, and bars soon fly asunder.' He contented himself with inserting wedges at night, under the impression that any efforts which thieves might make to break into the house would only strengthen his measures for keeping them out. This

showed a mechanical turn, which James in some degree inherited and which he would probably have cultivated, had he not been blind from his birth. His mother married a second time and sent him to a school in Wiltshire to get rid of him, under the pretence that his blindness rendered him incapable of tuition beyond learning his catechism and religious duties. From Wiltshire he was removed, for some reason not known, into Lincolnshire, where one of Lord Arundel's daughters took much notice of him, and very kindly instructed him in music so long as her health permitted. He was next sent to London, where he studied music under Molineux till he was about the age of sixteen, when his mother dispatched him to Norwich with a letter to his aunt, requesting that he might be kept 'under strict restraint.' His aunt put him into lodgings at the house of Mr. Lambert, a dancing master, and here he commenced teaching the piano-forte and singing upon his own account. His aunt, to his great delight, thought it unnecessary to show his mother's letter to Lambert. Whatever Mrs. Taylor's reasons may have been for enjoining 'strict restraint,' it is certain that he considered this mandate a piece of uncalled for severity, and that he never could speak of it without disgust. At a much later period Mrs. Taylor became insane and she once threatened her son's life. It may be harsh, therefore, to judge of her conduct by ordinary rules.

Taylor used to say that 'if he had any politeness,

he owed it all to Mrs. Muller.' This lady, who had a pension from government as the widow of an engineer of some eminence, lodged at his mother's house when he was a boy. She had half an eye and he had none ; hence perhaps the mutual sympathy between them. She was fond of walking with him and of polishing his manners. One day, as they were walking, he accosted some one whom they met, as 'Mr. Smith.' 'James,' said Mrs. Muller, 'that gentleman knows that his name is *Smith*, without your telling him ; *Sir* would have been quite enough.' From that time he never could bear to be *mistered*, or to address another by the appellation of *Mister* ; and when a pupil has so called him, he has been heard to say, 'It is not proper for you to *mister* your *superior*. I speak for your own sake, I care not what you call me.'

His sense of touch was remarkably quick, nature having compensated for defect of sight, as is not unusual, by bestowing greater keenness on the other faculties. Upon one occasion he gave a curious instance of this. He was spending an evening with a party of joiners, at the house of one of them, who was giving a treat in honour of his wife's birthday. In the course of the evening the host produced a tea-caddy, which he had made for a birthday present, and which the company pronounced to be a master-piece of skill. Taylor requested permission to examine it, and passing his lip over its edge, said that, 'It was very pretty, but not quite square.' This opinion was by no means

relished. The tea-caddy was more minutely examined, and by all but Taylor declared to be faultless. He, however, remained dissatisfied, insisting upon the application of the rule. The maker was as eager for the test as he ; but the result showed Taylor to be right, though the deviation from truth was so small as to be scarcely appreciable.

That his ear should have been fine will excite no surprise, since it was in constant exercise and since it had been assiduously trained. He could detect a sleeping echo by the sound of voices in common conversation, and he knew when he approached a post by his footfall. This acuteness of organ rendered him intolerant of some passages which good composers employ without scruple. Thus, he would not allow the interval of a perfect fourth, in the cadence, for the sake of a full chord, between two flutes, or two clarionets ; the peculiar quality of tone in these instruments rendering the fourth *naked* (however full the band), and causing it to be felt as an unresolved discord.

In early life he was intimate with Michael Crotch, a celebrated tunist and a half-brother of the late Dr. Crotch. Crotch exercised a powerful ascendancy over Taylor's mind, being many years his senior and a very able man. The former was a rigid and an exclusive adherent of the old school ; one who looked upon the homage which then began to be paid to Haydn, as a sort of rebellious defection from Handel. Taylor, to

whom Crotch's word was law, joined in the abuse which was liberally bestowed upon the oratorio of 'The Creation.' He assented to the opinion that the chorus 'A new created world,' was better suited to the words 'A new enamelled watch;' and he accepted Crotch's dictum, that 'If Haydn had restricted himself to writing canzonets, there would have been but one opinion concerning him.' Crotch, it is to be feared, died in this narrow creed; but Taylor lived to repent of his folly. Latterly his admiration of Haydn was great, though he did not rate him highly as a choral writer, and he has been heard to confess that 'he could not help being pleased with Haydn's music, at the very time when he was abusing it, and that he was angry with himself for feeling that pleasure.' There was no insincerity in all this. Taylor believed the music to be bad upon authority; 'for,' said he, 'I had laid my own judgment at the feet of Crotch.'

No man could have a more slavish reverence for authority than Taylor had before he learned his own strength, after which he completely shook off old trammels. He did not, however, emancipate himself from the thrall of superstition. To the last he was an avowed believer in *ghosts*, and he silenced all argument by the startling assertion that he had once *seen one*! As there is no reason to doubt his having been in earnest, and as he had a reverence for truth, it can only be supposed that he was the dupe of some

melancholy dream, at a time when his bodily health was disordered.

At an early period of his musical career he was of course acquainted with the leading professors and amateurs of Norwich. Of the latter the Rev. C. Smyth seems to have stood well in his opinion as a theorist. For Dr. Beckwith, both as a composer and an organist, he had great reverence. When Taylor was a youth of about eighteen, he would take the melody of some fugue subject to St. Peter's Church on a Sunday afternoon, put it into the Doctor's hand during the sermon and request him to introduce it into the voluntary in playing the people out of church. The Doctor would ponder over it for a few minutes, take an enormous pinch of snuff, and then say that he would see what he could do with it. When the Doctor had given out the subject and replied to it in the regular way, he would treat it, if possible, by inversion, reversion, augmentation, and diminution, carrying it through a course of modulation till he came to the *knot*, when he would bring the replies in closer and closer, till Taylor was in a rapture of delight. He used to say 'Doctor Beckwith's playing was brilliancy itself.' He did not rate the Doctor quite so highly as a theorist as he did as a composer. He would say, 'Dr. Beckwith, sir, had a retentive memory; he would defend a progression by ready quotations from Haydn or Handel. If you disputed these authorities he had no more to say.

Now, *I* would have given *reasons*, which could not have been disputed.' In fact the Doctor disliked reading treatises of harmony ; but Taylor, if he had not been obliged to depend upon others, would have read from morning till night. Yet he greatly respected Dr. Beckwith's mental powers. He often said of Beckwith, 'He was a man of so much mind, sir ! He had *a bushel* of mind. He was none of your little dogs. Oh, no, the devil a bit. He was a fine fellow !'

Taylor went on, teaching, composing, and playing the organ at the Roman Catholic Chapel in St. John's Madder-market, apparently in easy circumstances till his mother's death. Upon that event the misconduct of two lawyers, whom he imprudently trusted, robbed him of his little patrimony and threw him into difficulties from which he had no power to extricate himself. The remainder of his life was a painful struggle with the '*res angusta domi.*' Yet, having schooled his heart to the duty of forgiveness, he never alluded to the cruel treatment that he had received ; nor sought for retaliation upon the authors of his ruin. His blindness, and even his religion, were, more or less, obstacles to his obtaining pupils, and his profound musical knowledge could not be turned to much pecuniary advantage. Soon after he became pressed for money, he was persuaded to give a lecture upon music at the Old Hall Concert Room by St. George's bridge. The lecture was well

attended, and the musical compositions with which he illustrated it upon the organ excited the surprise of those who had not known him as a composer. The proceeds, though small, delighted him so much that after a short time he was anxious to repeat the experiment, and he actually prepared another lecture for that purpose. His friends, however, knowing that it could at best afford mere temporary relief, did not come forward with alacrity, as before, and so the project was abandoned. He then set himself to write a practical treatise upon harmony, an arduous undertaking under his peculiar circumstances. The examples were pricked upon a wooden board containing raised lines and spaces in imitation of the musical staff. The lines and spaces had holes for the reception of pegs with flat heads and short arms, the position of which indicated the value of the notes. When the board was full he was obliged to lay it aside till he could find some one at leisure to copy its contents upon paper. The letter-press was written from his dictation. Thus, like Robinson Crusoe, he built his boat without having calculated upon how it was to be got into the water. He could neither publish his work himself, nor find others who were willing to encounter the risk of doing it for him. At length the manuscript was mentioned to Dr. (then Mr.) Buck, the organist of Norwich Cathedral, who, seeing the urgency of the case, bethought himself of another way of serving him. The plan was to raise a

subscription by quarterly payments, from which Taylor was to receive a certain sum weekly for the term of his natural life. The cheerfulness with which this call was responded to by Taylor's friends and the public was alike creditable to all parties concerned. If the generosity exhibited was extraordinary, the worth which called it forth could have been no less so.

Mr. Taylor received his first payment in August, 1840, and continued to receive for nearly ten years, in sums varying from five shillings to eight shillings a week. During this period he gave frequent proofs of the honour and integrity by which his conduct was always guided. Upon several occasions, he received sums of money directly from private hands, together with an intimation that such sums were not intended to form part of the subscription, but to be used by himself as his exigencies might require. He, however, invariably brought them to those who had undertaken the management of the fund, with whom he would have no concealments. Had a purse of untold gold been committed to his care, when he wanted bread, it is believed by those who knew him best that he would have held the contents sacred. By the year 1849, death and other causes had so reduced the subscriptions as to render them inadequate to the purpose for which they were intended. When this became known to Mr. R. N. Bacon, the Editor of the 'Norwich Mercury,' that gentleman kindly exerted himself to procure him the benefit of a local charity

called the 'Old man's Hospital.' In this he happily succeeded. Taylor, however, steadily refused to become an inmate during the lifetime of his wife, from whom he would not be separated; but about a year after her death, which took place in May, 1851, he entered the house, which thenceforth became his home.

He died in the parish of St. Augustine, while on a temporary visit to his son, on Thursday, June 7, in 1855, without apparent suffering, and he was buried on the following Sunday by the side of his wife in St. Mary's churchyard, being carried to the grave by the choir of St. John's Chapel.

Mr. James Taylor was only once married; he had twelve children, eight of whom died young; four arrived at maturity, and two, a son and daughter, survive him.

Taylor was a man of middle size, rather inclined to corpulency in the prime of life, with a florid complexion, Roman nose, and comely features. His address was bland and insinuating, and his vocabulary copious, considering that his infirmity cut him off from literary resources. His articulation in speaking was beautifully distinct. Like many other blind men, to avoid singularity of speech, he would always tell his friends 'He was glad to *see* them.' His temper was naturally warm, though well under command. He had a large share of harmless egotism, that was excessively amusing. Conscious that

his profound musical learning and original views were 'caviare to the million,' he would inflict them without mercy upon those whom he judged capable of understanding and appreciating them, and this the more eagerly as the number in his opinion was very small. His reverence for the sex was deep and sincere. He would say to any man, in the strictness of whose morals he professed to believe, 'Sir, I doubt whether you, or I, be capable of imagining the purity of the female mind.' He had also an awful sense of the truth and obligations of Religion. But in his mind Christianity was absolutely identified with Romanism. It was useless to argue the point with him, since to refute was not to convince him. He once cut short a controversy with 'Sir, if the Catholic Church go to hell, we Catholics will go to hell with her.' All he would grant was, that 'Had his father lived and his mother died, he should have lived and died a Protestant.'

The sense of his poverty and blindness rendered his natural sensitiveness painfully acute. His pride was always being needlessly wounded. Drawing himself up he would say—'Though we sweep the streets, we are gentlemen.' To soothe him he was often told that he might be a doctor of music, when he pleased; to which he would reply—'Yes, sir; 'tis true I could write for my degree, but who ever saw a doctor with a hole in his coat?'

The Norwich Festival Committee showed their

respect for his talents, by always granting him a free ticket of admission to all the rehearsals and performances. The Gresham Professor of Music (who, though a *namesake* was no relation) was always his steady friend, and when asked for his contribution to the fund, used to say, 'Taylor shall never want a sovereign while I live and have one to give.'

Mr. James Taylor was always ready to impart his musical knowledge to a professional brother, either gratuitously, or for such a fee as the other could afford to pay. After hearing some parts of Mr. George Perry's first Oratorio, he told the composer that some of the choruses would be vastly improved by the introduction of fugue. To this the other honestly replied, that 'he would have given fugue, had he known how to write it,' or words to that effect. Taylor hinted as delicately as he could that he should be happy to give him information on that head. Perry was delighted, and after their first conversation upon the subject, produced a chorus that perfectly astonished Taylor, 'Odds, Bobs, sir,' said he, 'I did not throw away a word upon Perry—a hint to him was as good as a lesson to most men—I could hardly give it him fast enough.'

It has been shown that Taylor had been prejudiced against Haydn in early life ; it must now be confessed that he entertained a still more violent dislike to Mozart ; a dislike which he never could entirely overcome. The thing, however, may be easily, if not

satisfactorily, accounted for. Taylor's blindness compelled him to get all his chapel music by heart. He could retain or vary his own compositions at pleasure ; but the length of Mozart's masses rendered them too great a burden for his memory, and the fear of committing some mistake always made him nervous when he had to do them. Now, the Willow-lane congregation had a pardonable preference for Mozart's music, which, he thought, ultimately deprived him of the organ of that chapel. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* A wicked friend took a malicious pleasure in tormenting him upon this subject, and used to enjoy the ludicrous dilemma in which he was placed by his consciousness of Mozart's greatness, together with his determination never to acknowledge it. He, however, always confined his censure to the *sacred* compositions of Mozart—and would say, by way of compensation, after having abused them liberally—‘ Sir, I know a movement of Mozart's in C minor, which makes him a king of composers ! ’ And then, as if this were too much, he would add, ‘ but only think, sir, of a fellow's beginning an “ *Agnus Dei*,” precisely in the way in which he began “ *Dove sono!* ” but the devotion of a foreigner is not like the devotion of an Englishman.’ He was then perhaps reminded of the Benedictus in the Requiem, and asked if that were not sweet ? ‘ Sweet, sir ? ’ he would exclaim, ‘ a great deal too sweet—that Benedictus is a plum pudding all plums ; but I don't like a plum pudding all plums. If I had to write a

requiem, do you think I would make it sweet? No, sir, I should see the corpse before me.' Then roaring out some sepulchral strain in G minor, he would end with 'that, sir, is the sort of stuff that requiems are made of.'

His musical sensibility was so great, that he has been seen to grope his way out of St. Andrew's Hall in order to escape some chorus of Handel, which he felt that he should not be able to stand. Once, however, he was caught at a performance of the 'Messiah.' He sat in deep attention till the commencement of the chorus 'And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.' In spite of all his efforts to control himself, his breath grew short, his knees knocked together, and before the grand climax he was carried out in strong hysterics. He used often to say that the only music which could so affect him was Handel's and *his own!* In spite of his reverence for the great master, there was one progression in 'Deeper and deeper still,' to which he affirmed 'he could never be reconciled, though it was written by Handel.'

His favourite composer was Webbe, whose masses and glees he held to be first rate. He was also a great admirer of Spohr, giving the palm to his 'Fall of Babylon.' Weber he thought rather too unconnected. To him the greatest charm in music was simplicity. He has been affected even to tears by an air in Mehul's 'Joseph,' sung to the words 'When death with his cruel arm hurried.' He did not think highly of

French music, and said that 'a Frenchman did not often write a good thing, but when he did, it was sure to be *a gem*.'

His own compositions were chiefly vocal, with an organ or piano-forte accompaniment. But the mass composed for the opening of the Willow-lane Chapel employs a full band. Being desirous of introducing trombones, he sent for the players to hear what they could do, and when they had left him, wrote the '*Kyrie*' in G minor. Sir George Smart, who chanced to be in Norwich and heard that movement rehearsed, was so struck with the wailing of the trombones that he would not believe that the instrumentation was written by a poor, blind, Norwich musician, till he had seen and conversed with the composer.

It has been already said that Taylor was a great lover of simplicity, wherein only he thought, true expression could be found. His melodies therefore were pure and vocal, and his harmonies generally natural. He wrapt himself up in his words and studied to impart their meaning to his music. But he delighted in now and then treating the ear to what he called 'a fine surprise.' An example of this occurs in his air 'Bring forth the lyre,' at the words 'And list to the wild wind's song,' where the interrupted cadence proper to the minor mode, is given in the major. As an instance of the simplicity of his part writing we have the glee 'Romantic Sounds,' an effect of gradual harmony. We may also quote the set of three anthems dedicated

to Lady Bedingfield, which have been long published, though they are little known, and a MS. anthem 'Sweetly was heard,' which deserves to see the light.

It is needless to say that the ballads of Shield and Dibdin stood high in his estimation, except for the purpose of observing, that he thought the latter was indebted for some of his great originality to the singularity of his metre.

Taylor's execution upon the piano-forte would not be thought much of at the present day, but what he did, he did well. Nothing could be more finely graduated than his crescendos and diminuendos. He also prided himself upon having equal power of execution with either hand. This he acquired and maintained by frequently playing the upper part upon the bass. He used to say, 'If you would have both hands equal, you must give them equal work to do.' He brought out a fine volume of tone and made the instrument *sing*.

His pupils were kept to level playing for an unusually long time. Upon one occasion a lady who had unbounded confidence in him, could not help rather losing patience whilst her daughter was acquiring firmness of touch and strength of hand. Other girls in a much shorter period, had gained much brilliancy and dash, whilst the young lady in question had been not so much as told the meaning of the words '*forte*' and '*piano*.' The answer to all solicitations upon this head was, 'Not yet, not quite yet.' Till at length the

mother was asked one morning 'Whether she would like to hear her daughter execute a *crescendo*, for the time had now arrived and the thing could be taught in five minutes?' In about the time specified the thing *was* taught and done. Taylor's secret was simple—'For a *forte*, or *piano*, you must stiffen or relax the fingers.' After this young lady (or one of her sisters) had been playing one evening at a private house in London, her mother was asked, by a musical professor, under whose instructions the former had been placed during her visits to town; and he expressed some surprise, when told that she had never received a lesson in London, that so much elegance and finish was to be obtained in the country. The fact was, that she had never had tuition from any one but Taylor.

Taylor had some peculiarities of fingering, which were laughed at by some of his brother professors, till Hummell's work came out; but when they found that Hummell had been anticipated in more than one instance, they laughed no longer.

His singing lessons also were in many respects peculiar to himself. Thus, instead of beginning with Do, Re, Mi, and the *slow* scale, he gave the pupils one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, one, and the *quick* scale. When it was objected that he should have taught his pupils to walk, before he taught them to run, his reply was that he *did* so teach them; meaning that he advanced from the easy to the difficult. He held that the scale should be perfectly equal, like a fine peal of

bells. That if you began with the slow scale, it would be impossible for the pupil by the time of arriving at the fourth or fifth note, to remember what had been the quality of the first. But that, in the case of the quick scale, there was no time either to forget, or to alter. The use of the figures ensured a good articulation. When the time arrived for teaching the slow scale, he did not resort to the syllables, but to the word 'Hallelujah,' lest the pupils should be misled by the idea, that *scaling* is something different from *singing*. Whilst the scaling was going on, he would sustain the voice by an extempore accompaniment upon the piano-forte; familiarizing the pupil by degrees, to maintain equality of tone against the richest and boldest harmonies. His favourite practice for securing articulation and point was Recitative. He would put the pupil to this at a very early stage, himself always playing the accompaniment. He invariably detected the slightest distortion of visage in the singer. 'Ah,' he would exclaim, 'you are *making up a face*, you must sing before a glass.' When things went well, his countenance would brighten up and he would encourage the voice with an accompaniment of consummate elegance.

Taylor was very jealous of the purity of the vowel sounds. The care which he took to prevent the *i* from degenerating into *e*, was extreme. He was also very careful that words should be distinctly separated; thus, if one word ended with a consonant and the next

began with a vowel, he insisted that the word beginning with the vowel should be pronounced 'with a rising chin.' But that which he held to be above everything, the *sine quâ non* with a singer, was a liberal education. 'Except I have ladies and gentlemen,' he would say, 'I cannot make finished singers. Give me an educated child, who never heard others sing, and I shall have little or nothing to teach;' meaning that he would have no bad habits to overcome. He would say at the commencement of the slow scale, or of a long passage, 'Fill your chest and husband your breath as a miser would his gold.'

In selecting voices for a chorus, he allowed that trebles and basses should be more numerous than the inner voices, because the trebles have the melody and the basses form the foundation; but he liked that the counter-tenors should rather outnumber the tenors; his reason being, that the greater compass usually assigned to tenors in the higher part of their scale, by demanding from them greater exertion, sometimes brings on reed. He occasionally strengthened a solo, at his chapel, by making two or three voices sing the part. The quality, however, was so identical, that no one detected the employment of more than one voice.

It was, however, in what is called 'the theory of music,' that Mr. Taylor's originality of conception had most scope for display. His attention was first directed to this branch of his art, by reading (or

rather hearing read to him) a translation of Rameau's celebrated treatise. The acquisition of Rameau's principles gratified his appetite for speculative study. Whether he lay awake in his bed at night, or walked abroad in what to him could hardly be called day, he revolved them in his mind. He next betook himself to the theoretical works of Kollman, with whom he became personally acquainted, and for whom he had always a very high esteem. The rock upon which, in his opinion, they both split, was a rigid adherence to system. Music was an art which had not to be invented, but explained. Instead of explaining it as far as they could see their way, each of these writers affected to reduce it to a perfect system. To this end they gave rule upon rule and precept upon precept; but as some of these rules were at variance with the practices which they were brought to sanction, a necessity arose for exceptions and assumptions often of a self-contradictory character. This Taylor saw, and wisely abstained from attempting to construct a system of his own. He pointed out the evils to which this excessive love of system had given rise, gave clear rules for writing correct harmony, and in disputed cases maintained that the ear must be finally the umpire.

He not only accepted Rameau's doctrine of 'the double employ' but extended its use to the dominant seventh, in a stream of harmony, and hence produced a regular scheme for the twofold resolution of discords.

It was enough, he thought, except in a cadence, if discord was followed by concord. He thus obtained many novel effects, and gave new progressions to inversions of the minor and diminished sevenths. Thus, if C and D were bound together in the key of G, instead of resolving the discord C into B, he let it hold on, sending D up to E, which equally resolved the second into the third. To show his readiness at reply it may be observed, that upon some one's once objecting to the new resolution upon the ground that the fourth of the scale calls the third more powerfully than the fifth does the sixth, he instantly rejoined, You are *assuming* the mode to be *major*; but, Sir, I did not say that the new is an equally satisfactory resolution, but merely that it may be allowed with advantage for the sake of variety, in the middle of a period.'

He thought that the *modern* chord of the 'added sixth' crept in through a misapprehension of Rameau. Wherever we find the fourth of the scale bearing a chord of the sixth and fifth, we are told now, that the fourth is the fundamental note, whatever may be the progression. Thus, in the key of C, F with a six five, is called a chord of the added sixth, though the progression be to the chord of G. But Rameau's chord of the added sixth invariably went to the tonic harmony. In the case of the progression to G, he would have considered the chord as an inversion of a chord of the seventh upon the second of the scale. When Taylor was told that the moderns

defend their practice by an appeal to nature, urging the impossibility that a note bearing an imperfect fifth (as would be the case if the mode were minor) could ever be the root of a chord, he laughed, and replied, 'Then, Sir, I will rob them of their minor mode altogether; for nature disowns the minor third as much as she does the imperfect fifth. But why make the *fourth* the root? Let them be consistent. If they must have a root, let them go down by thirds till they arrive at a note which bears a perfect fifth, and much good may it do them.'

Thus far he followed Kollman; but when Kollman, in *his* love of system, declared that 'to play strictly in the diatonic minor mode of any key requires that no other notes be introduced but those contained in the diatonic scale,' whilst at the same time he was obliged to allow the necessity of the sharp seventh, 'where the harmony is the leading chord to a perfect cadence on the tonic, or an inversion of it,' Taylor was quick enough in detecting the absurdity. 'Kollman,' he would say, 'is so blinded by devotion to his system, that he can't see the difference between an *essential note* and what he calls a *chromatic extremity*. But the latter effects nothing, and the former determines everything. Sir, I should like to hear him modulate from C major to A minor without his *G sharp*.'

He thought that the writers of modern musical treatises did not insist enough upon two things; the omnipotence of melody, and the paramount import-

ance of a key. His reverence for the former was so great, that he never would condemn a progression till he had first heard the melody. 'However bad it may seem,' he would say, 'perhaps the melody may justify it; for melody will sometimes vindicate that which nothing else can.' In accordance with this view he once sent a phrase of melody to the 'Harmonicon,' which, in his opinion, justified consecutive fifths. The editor pounced upon the fifths and pronounced the passage 'neither good nor tolerable.' Taylor did not reply, but said privately amongst his friends, 'that the passage was good, because so constructed, that the fifths did not produce *the same melody in two different keys*, the only thing upon which their prohibition was founded.' He had arrived at this conclusion independently, and great was his delight when it was afterwards pointed out to him, that Rousseau was on his side; and so, it may be added, is Cherubini.

It has been seen that he enriched music with a scheme for 'the twofold resolution of discords,' founded upon the 'double employ' of Rameau; and it remains to be added, that he founded a doctrine of 'abrupt modulation by natural means,' upon the 'threefold use of the major and the fivefold use of the minor common chord.' It is not intended to be implied, that others have never used the same progressions, or some of them, which this doctrine led him to employ. But it is asserted that he alone introduced the principle into our systems of

harmony. He acted upon it methodically, and the result was, that he rendered the most abrupt modulations apparently natural. They were effected by degrees which enabled the ear to follow and find out their meaning. The nicest shades of affinity were brought into play, and led to passages of endless variety. When he was modulating at the pianoforte, it was his custom to strike every chord four times, as crotchets, and since it was impossible to tell, when he had a major chord under his hands, whether he meant to treat it as a key note, a fourth, or a fifth,—or, when a minor, whether as a key note, second, third, fourth, or sixth—the ear was always held in a pleasing state of suspense. To use a phrase of his own, he loved to ‘make the hair stand on end;’ but this was always done without harshness. Indeed it was a positive rule with him always to introduce the new key note before its dominant, if a major key was adopted where a minor one would have been expected, or the reverse. He made this hold good, even in going from C natural to C sharp major. Thus if he had taken the chords of C natural, G, E major, D sharp with a sharp sixth, sharp fourth, and sharp third, followed by C sharp, he would have made the last a minor chord. In order to allow it to be major, after the chord of E, he would probably have taken the chord of E sharp with a sharp sixth, followed by F sharp with a sharp sixth and sharp fifth, then G sharp with a sharp seventh, and C sharp major.

He would sometimes produce 'a fine surprise' by unexpectedly treating the common chord under his hands as a new key-note; at other times by giving the interrupted cadence proper to the minor mode, in the major. He would also produce beautiful effects by taking any common chord, then the diminished seventh upon the note below, resolving it upon the tone or semitone below that, using sometimes fundamental and sometimes inverted harmony. But, of course, his resources were endless.

A well known professor, long since dead, was once playing Purcell's 'From rosie bowers' to him upon the pianoforte, when he remarked that 'the accompaniment could be none of Purcell's, since it contained consecutive fifths.' The other excused himself by saying, 'that he had merely played an extempore accompaniment.' 'As if,' said Taylor afterwards, 'the circumstance of its being extempore could be any justification of the consecutive fifths!'

Taylor allowed an imperfect fifth to succeed the perfect in descending, but he would not suffer an imperfect fifth to rise to a perfect one. Thus, if the bass went from the key note to the third of the scale, and the melody from the third to the fifth, he let the key note hold on, under the seventh, instead of giving the dominant harmony. When pressed with the authority of Dr. Crotch for the full chord and ascending fifth, he would reply that 'neither Dr. Crotch nor anyone

else could make what was radically bad, good; and that it was a clumsy and needless violation of rule.' Here he had the practice of Mozart on his side.

He had little respect for the old rules for the progression of intervals. With Kollman, he regarded intervals as incomplete chords; insisting that if the chords were right, the intervals would not be wrong. He admitted, indeed, that the doctrine of intervals, and of the preparation of discords, had been of great use in their day; that the progression of intervals had probably led to the invention of fugue and canon; and that the preparation of discords had given rise to beautiful binding notes and suspensions. But these things being now understood, the old scaffolding, he thought, might safely be removed. To the doctrine of chords he attributed the use of arpeggios; and to the enlarged employment of arpeggios by Haydn, he imputed much of the elegance and refinement of modern melody. 'Haydn, sir,' he said, 'boasted of a *secret*, whereby he could teach people to write in his style. Now, I think I have found out his secret. It lay in an extended use of the arpeggio. When I am in the vein to compose, I play a few arpeggios of the common chord, slowly, upon the pianoforte. This excites expectation, and expectation begets ideas. One begins to sing; the piece is thus begun, and a piece once begun is almost as good as ended; for when the fancy is warmed, ideas flow fast enough of themselves.' He would often add, 'but mind you, sir, I

wrap myself up in the words, for the words are half the battle.'

It may be said, that this only applies to vocal composition. But instrumental writers, if they had not words, seem to have been driven to find a substitute. Thus Haydn found ideas for his grand sinfonias, by imagining some visible scene, such as the departure on a voyage of pleasure or the like ; and Beethoven is said to have considered a double subject as the strife of two conflicting principles, and so on. All this Taylor could understand. But he never could comprehend how it was that some composers could set the most contemptible trash to exquisite melodies, as was the case with Dr. Arne and Mozart. He used to say, 'the words they had to set would have killed him.'

In teaching harmony he was careful not to overburden the memory with rules at starting. Instead of telling his pupils to avoid consecutive fifths and octaves, he would caution them against similar motion, and against having two chords follow in the same position. They thus acquired a habit of observing the rules before they were even aware of their existence.

He never approved Burrowes' book on thorough bass. In his opinion 'thorough bass belonged to masters, not to scholars ; it was the *last* step in harmony.' His own plan was this. He gave the pupil the bass of a psalm tune figured ; but the tune was

composed by himself for the purpose. The harmony was simple, consisting of two or three chords and their inversions. To this bass the pupil had to compose a melody, filling up the intervals and giving each note its right progression. The metre of the psalm secured the rhythm, and divided the music into periods. The pupil took an interest in his work from its commencement, *the melody being his own composition*. Instead of being burdened with innumerable rules, and having to fill up dry chords, he was led at once into a flowery path, receiving rules by degrees which he had all along been unconsciously observing; the consequence was, that these rules, when imparted, failed to embarrass, because they entailed no new difficulty. They merely gave the sanction of reason to practice. The tunes became richer, by degrees, both in harmony and modulation. When the pupil had in this way cultivated his taste for melody and acquired a habit of filling up correctly, he was taught to write his music in parts. It was pointed out to him how easily this might be done, by merely allowing the inner parts to cross, or by occasionally inverting them, so as to render them melodious and bring them within the compass of the voices. No new harmonies, no new bass, or treble, were needed. In all this Taylor did for his musical pupils what Mr. J. D. Harding has done for the student in art. In both cases one step succeeds another in such easy and natural gradation, that

progress is rapidly and unconsciously made. When you can do the foliage and ramification of a bough, you can do the foliage and ramification of a tree. There may be more surface to cover, but there is no new principle to master.

When Taylor's pupils had gone through the course of study above described, they had no longer a figured bass given them, but were expected to write the four parts for themselves ; not by composing a bass and setting parts to it, but producing the whole together as consecutive chords. The bass, however, was required to be melodious, and also to exhibit its peculiar character. That no embarrassment might arise from the student's ignorance of the laws of progression, he was restricted to the tonic and dominant harmonies and their inversions. Other chords were added, one at a time, till a tolerable degree of facility was acquired, and then the pupil was gradually initiated in the doctrine of connections and affinities. The old rule, that 'any two chords may succeed each other which have a note in common,' was thought by Taylor to be worse than useless, except in abrupt modulation, where the note in common lay uppermost, as in a transition from the chord of C major to that of A flat major. 'For,' said he, 'you cannot even go from the key-note to its third fundamentally, by means of the note in common, because in this case the ear requires the third to carry the chord of the sixth.' He also repudiated Kollman's doctrine,

that two concords cannot succeed each other diatonically ; and that when they *seem* to do so, one of them must be understood to be an *incomplete* chord of the seventh. According to Taylor's view, a discord with the discord omitted, was no discord at all. He fell back upon that maxim of the lawyers :—'*de non apparentibus, et non existentibus, eadem est ratio.*' To justify the interrupted cadence, as some have done, by an *imaginary* chord of D, between the chords of G and A, he thought the height of absurdity. With respect to the interrupted cadence, he said, 'is the effect good or bad ? If it be bad, away with the interrupted cadence ; but if good, what better reason can be given for *any* progression than this—it has *a good effect* ?' As for *imaginary* chords, he reasoned thus unanswerably against them. If they really justified any progression, it could only be to those capable of forming the imagination. But the doctrine was invented to defend progressions, which had been held good before it ever was thought of, and which therefore could not possibly have admitted such vindication. Dr. Johnson refuted those who denied the existence of matter, by kicking a mighty stone down a hill. Taylor refuted the opponents of diatonic progression, by composing a magnificent psalm-tune, full of such progressions by contrary motion, and pleasing those with it, who had never heard of *imaginary chords* !

Diatonic progression was forbidden, because chords

so succeeding each other wanted the note in common. Taylor, by showing that a progression which had the note in common might be bad, and that progressions were acknowledged to be good, which were without it, struck at the very root of the rule. His progressions were founded on the relationship of chords to the key, and on their mutual affinities and dependencies. His pupils, however, got a practical feeling of natural relationships, from being set to play the 'rule of the octave' in all keys, in both modes, and in all the different positions of the chords.

It only remains to be added, that Taylor was profoundly versed in the mysteries of Fugue, Canon, and double Counterpoint, his rules for all which were short and simple. He always insisted that a composer should be familiar with this branch of his art, not for the sake of writing fugues and canons, or of showing his learning, but in order that he might know the true value of a subject, and how to make the most of it; for without this knowledge many fine points of imitation would be lost.

MR. JAMES TAYLOR'S SYSTEM OF TUNING
THE PIANOFORTE.

Extract from another account of Mr. Taylor, intended for publication, but unfinished.

He held that a palpable line ought to be drawn between the *Science* of Acoustics and the *Art* of

Music. 'An art,' said he, 'which has not now to be *invented* but *explained* to those who need an explanation.' Accordingly he would hear nothing of *ratios* and *vibrations* and the *comma ditonicum*; for he considered that a fine and educated ear is the last court of appeal in music. Hence he would have even the operation of tuning to be rather a musical than a mathematical affair. He once tried his hand upon his own pianoforte and obtained what he called 'that fine ringing tune' for which his friend Crotch was celebrated. His blindness, however, made the task so irksome that he did not repeat it. His advice to me upon this head was as follows.

C \sharp being tuned to concert pitch, tune its chord E, G, C, to it, as perfect as possible. To the G tune B and D, a third and a fifth, and tune the lower D an octave to the upper one. Tune the chord of F as fifth and third below the upper C. Then try the four chords thus: C common chord, G common chord, D with the seventh G common chord, C common chord and F common chord. You thus get the chords in connection and can hear, and rectify whatever is amiss. Tune F \sharp a major third to D. Do the same by G \sharp to E, and C \sharp to A. Tune B \flat a minor seventh to C and then try it as a minor third to G. Tune E \flat as a minor seventh to F and try it as a minor third to C. Also try it with care as a fifth to A \flat . The rest of the instrument is to be tuned perfect octaves to the field, or foundation, thus obtained.

The great advantage of the above system of tuning consists in its affording means of preserving a connection between the chords, which are rendered dependent upon each other, as in real music.

THE DOUBLE PEAL OF SIX.

The following letter appeared in the 'Norfolk Chronicle,' and in the 'Norwich Mercury' of June 2nd, 1832.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—On Tuesday morning the scale of a double peal of six, upon an entirely new construction, was, at my request, executed by St. Peter's company of ringers, under the direction of Mr. Hurry. The complete success which attended this effort leads me to hope, that in time we shall hear the 720 changes rung upon the same principle. This would be the commencement of a new æra in the annals of ringing, and would do more to impart a *musical* character to the art, than anything that has hitherto been attempted.

For the ingenious and beautiful arrangement which I am about to lay before your readers, the public is indebted to the skill of my friend, Mr. James Taylor, a gentleman whose compositions and profound knowledge of harmony have obtained for him no mean celebrity in his profession.

The following scheme shows the order in which the bells are united :—

5	6	4	1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12

Thus, the fifth and seventh bells are struck together, the sixth and eighth, the fourth and ninth, the treble and tenth, the second and eleventh, and the third and tenor.

The common wedding peal consists of a monotonous succession of octaves, preceded (*ominously*, it must be confessed) by a *discord*. Mr. Taylor's arrangement comprises a minor and major third, a major sixth, and a major and two minor tenths. An entire peal on these incomplete chords would form an union of two distinct melodies, flowing in reversed and retrograde counterpoint. A single example will suffice to show the beautiful variety which would be produced by an employment of the *changes*. The major sixth, in its present situation, is felt as a portion of the dominant harmony ; but if we suppose it to be followed by the minor third now placed at the beginning of the series, the new progression would cause that sixth to become part of another chord, and consequently to assume quite a different character. Delightful and uncommon effects upon a magnificent scale would thus be continually breaking upon the ear of the gratified harmonist. The solitary and fitful sixth, now coming between the thirds, and

now between the tenths, and now forming a connecting link to both, would give to each period its peculiar charm. One cannot indeed conceive to what a depth that voluptuous melancholy which the sound of distant bells is well known to have the power of exciting, might be carried by this species of music.

Double peals of four might be constructed upon the same principle, which would be equally superior to those in present use.

May 30, 1832.

Scheme of a double peal of four. (MS.) :—

3	4	2	1
5	6	7	8

September 18, 1833.

. *The pamphlet on Haydn's 'Creation' and the Letters in this volume were originally published under the Author's name. The analysis of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus was stated to be 'by the Author of "Musical Colloquies in the Anglo-Saxon" "Remarks on Haydn's Creation, &c."*

[AUGUST 1872.]

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